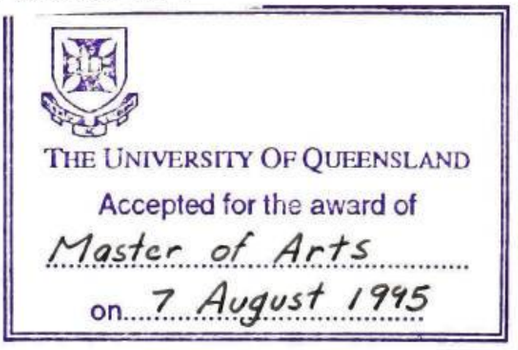

'Bora Belonga White Man'

Missionaries and Aborigines at Lockhart River Mission

by

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A Thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts
Department of Anthropology and Sociology
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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own independent research, and that all sources which have been consulted are acknowledged in the reference list. The material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

David Thompson

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I gratefully acknowledge the patient assistance of the people of Lockhart River in sharing with me their language, culture, ceremonies and history during the eight years of my residence, 1969-77, and during subsequent visits. Among those too numerous to list are Cissy Rocky, Ivy Ropeyarn, Isaac Hobson, Donald and Beatrice Hobson, Jerry Pascoe, many Bora relations and those since departed including Peter Pascoe, Hughie Temple, Furry Short, Jimmy Doctor, Billy Clarmont, Charlie Omeenyo, Simon Ropeyarn, George Rocky, Alec Niger, Michael Sandy, Harry Seiu, Billy Daniels, Johnny Short, Jack Temple, Johnson Butcher, James Butcher, Alec and Maudie Sandy, Rex Moses, Mick Omeenyo, Lizzie Ropeyarn and Nullam Marrott. I am grateful too for the willing assistance of former superintendent, now retired priest, Canon John Warby, and other former Mission staff: Garnet and Elizabeth Pidsley, and Mr & Mrs Thornton.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the history of the interaction between missionaries and Aborigines at the Lockhart River Mission, Cape York Peninsula, from three theoretical perspectives – that of internal colonialism, Weber's ideal types of authority, and Burridge's categories of 'Devotional' and 'Affirmative' in his approach to Christian mission. These are discussed in Chapter 1. This is followed by an examination of historical models of Christian mission in Chapter 2 and this chapter outlines the shift from the faith movement of early Christianity to its gradual institutionalisation through official recognition by emperors, to the compromise of the Church with secular powers, to the domination of the spiritual over the secular in the Middle Ages, and the amalgamation of religious and secular powers in colonial expansion. The Reformation led to renewed emphasis on faith and Scripture, while the challenge of the Enlightenment period went further to break the nexus between Church and State. Anglican Mission generally reflected the Church's close alignment to the State due to its establishment status in England.

Chapter 3 examines the period of dispossession and early settlement in Australia with a view to establishing the patterns of European/Aboriginal relations, both secular and religious, and to show the typical response of the Mission Station approach to protect, isolate, resocialise and evangelise Aboriginal people. Chapter 4 then reviews a similar pattern of contact and dispossession in Queensland, particularly in Cape York Peninsula. Queensland Government policy with respect to Aborigines in the Acts of 1897, 1939 and 1965 are outlined, and the development of Christian Missions in Queensland is discussed. The chapter then turns to the development of the Australian Board of Missions, the Diocese of Carpentaria and Anglican Missions and concludes with an examination of the Anglican Church's thinking on policy for Aborigines. The chapter demonstrates the continuation of the early pattern of Mission Stations for protective segregation of Aborigines for the dual purposes of resocialising ('civilising') and evangelising.

Chapters 5 to 8 examine four distinctive periods of the history of the Lockhart River Mission, paying particular attention to the social relations between missionaries and Aborigines, namely:

- the establishment period, 1924-38, under Superintendent Harry Rowan
- the difficult period, 1939 to 1948, including the War years, under Superintendent Harry Johnson
- the buoyant period of the Christian Co-operative, 1951-60, under Superintendent John Warby, followed by the short harsh rule of John Currie and the closure of the Co-operative
- the struggles of 1960-7 when environmental and financial pressure forced the Church to hand over control of the Mission to the Queensland Government, and the relocation of the settlement further north.

Resocialisation occurred mainly as a result of charismatic qualities of leadership supported by the legal-rational authority structure of the Mission. This is seen especially in the period of John Warby's superintendency. It is noted that both Rowan and Currie exhibited some coercion in their interaction with Aborigines. The development of the Mission was hampered, however, by consistent underfunding by Government and Church, and lack of suitable and sufficient staff.

The Conclusion in Chapter 9 summarises (a) the pattern of 'colonial social relations' through most periods of the Mission's history, (b) the typical pattern of combining 'civilising' and evangelising through the Mission Station approach, and (c) the undermining of Mission aims both by the Government's low funding priority and the inadequate Church support, resulting in the emergence of underdevelopment at an early stage. While the high point of European/Aboriginal relationships occurred with John Warby, the Co-operative he established, which renewed the life of the Mission, only superficially matched Aboriginal patterns of sharing and could not be sustained economically in the isolated environment. After its demise, underdevelopment quickly re-emerged.

The thesis concludes by demonstrating that Burridge's category of 'Devotional' is useful in delineating the impact of the religious side of Mission life, in particular the influence of the Torres Strait Islander approach to Christianity. The shortage of funds and Chaplains, however, meant that the lay missionaries were often overwhelmed by what Burridge refers to as the 'Affirmative' (social involvement) side of Mission life, and this produced a degree of secularisation and marginalisation of both Aboriginal and Christian religion.

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Introduction

This thesis focusses on the interaction between missionaries and Aborigines at the Lockhart River Mission, 1924-1967, on the east coast of Cape York Peninsula. This interaction will be viewed firstly in the wider context of European/Aboriginal 'colonial social relations', then in the particular motivations, ideals and cultural expectations of the missionaries, including their inevitable role as agents of colonialism, and then as far as possible in the point of view of Aboriginal participants in the Mission life.

The latter aspect poses difficulties for the researcher who, in this instance, is heavily reliant on mission and government records which themselves are slight in the early period, reflect the bias of those in positions of authority, and reveal the assumptions of social evolution, racial attitudes and policies of the time. It is too easy to assume, after Hobsbawm, that Aborigines are 'pre-political people', that is, those "who have not yet found, or only begun to find, a specific language in which to express their aspirations about the world" (E J Hobsbawm in Guha 1986:5-6). Instead, behind the primary sources, the Aborigines' awareness of their own world and actions in it must be sought.

The view taken of the Aborigines of Lockhart River Mission, then, is not simply that they were victims of circumstances, or 'primitive' people manipulated by colonial authorities and missionaries, but that they were active participants who acted partly by necessity, partly by deliberate choice, and partly through various means of resistance. Guha's comment in regard to peasant consciousness in colonial India is apposite, "subordination can hardly be justified as an ideal and a norm without acknowledging the fact and possibility of insubordination, so that the affirmation of dominance in the ruling culture speaks eloquently of its Other, that is, resistance" (Guha 1986:11). Guha endeavours to elicit the consciousness of peasant insurgents from the oppositional records of counter-insurgency, that is, records of police, soldiers, bureaucrats, etc, representing their will or view. He states,

> But these documents do not get their content from that will alone, for the latter is predicated on another will — that of the insurgent. It should be possible therefore to read the presence of a rebel consciousness as a necessary and pervasive element within that body of evidence (Guha 1986:15).

In such a way, the primary documents relating to the Lockhart River Mission can be expected to reveal the consciousness of the Aborigines by the manner in which others have responded to them.

Theoretical perspectives drawn on in this thesis include the theory of internal colonialism, Weber's approach to relations of power and authority, and aspects of Burridge's approach to the study of Christian missionary endeavours. In respect of the Lockhart River Mission, some oral history evidence is available through the writer's interaction with post-Mission residents during his own residence there from 1969 to 1977 and in subsequent visits, and through the PhD research undertaken by Dr Athol Chase. Chase's thesis (1980) is an analysis of tradition, continuity and change at the post-Mission Lockhart River Community. It provides an account of contact history and reveals the dimensions of past and current identity groups among the Aboriginal people of the region.

Other anthropological and linguistic studies of the region were undertaken by Dr Donald Thomson during 1928-9, by Lamont West Jr in 1961-2, Dr Wolfgang Laade in 1963 and by the writer in the 1970s. Thomson published a substantial monograph on traditional ceremonial life as well as briefer articles, but he was unable to complete his field work (Thomson 1933b, 1934). Laade spent a month recording Bora songs and published some useful notes (Laade 1970). West undertook a linguistic survey (West 1964) and recorded much material which has never been transcribed. My own studies during my time as Chaplain involved surveying dialect variation, developing a phonetic and grammatical outline of the sandbeach languages of Kuuku Ya'u and Umpila (Thompson 1988), and a comparative study of the Bora initiation practices and parallels to Aboriginal Christianity (Thompson 1985). A popular account of a buoyant period at the Mission under superintendent John Warby was published in novel form in 1959 by Kylie Tennant.

Primary resources available are copies of historical documents obtained from Church and Government sources. These include records of the Department of Aboriginal and Islander Affairs obtained from the archives of the Queensland Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Advancement, documents from the Australian Board of Missions archives and publications, and records of the Diocese of Carpentaria held at Thursday Island and at the John Oxley Library in Brisbane.

In the wider region of Cape York Peninsula, early ethnographic and linguistic research was undertaken in the 1930s by Ursula McConnel and Lauriston Sharp, in the 1970s and 80s by Chris Anderson at Bloomfield, John Taylor at Pormpuraaw, John von Sturmer and Peter Sutton at Aurukun, and Bruce Rigsby at Pt Stewart, while further afield in the Gulf country of north Queensland, David Trigger undertook research at Doomadgee. The theses by Anderson and Trigger are of particular relevance to the theoretical perspectives of this work. Anderson's study of change among the Kuku-Yalanji through Aboriginal and European interaction (Anderson 1984) draws on the notion of articulation of modes of production, while Trigger's argument "focusses on Weber's general treatment of power relations" (Trigger 1985:9). Others who have used the mode of production approach are Dawn May (1986, 1994) in her studies on Aboriginal labour in the north Queensland cattle industry, and Jeremy Beckett (1977, 1987) in his study of the Torres Strait pearl industry.

In this thesis the approach of Weber supplements the mode of production articulation of internal colonialism, which is weak in accounting for social and political influences. Weber's ideal types of authority assist the focus on the personal dimension of the interaction of missionaries and Aborigines. Anthropological studies of missionaries are often lacking in attention to the rationale of their religious motivations and this is addressed through Burridge's categories of 'Devotional' and 'Affirmative', which contrast the sacerdotal emphasis of ritual and holiness, and the world-affirming emphasis of social action. Some perspective is also given through a summary account of historical approaches to Christian mission which provides background to particular socio-religious

attitudes of missionaries and modern missiological approaches to mission that draw upon anthropology, history and theology (see Tippet 1987:xiii-xiv).

The first chapter addresses the theoretical perspectives, and this is followed by an outline of historical models of mission and some reflection on aspects of gospel and culture. Before the specific context of the Lockhart River Mission is examined, the wider background of European contact of both colonists and the Churches is reviewed. These early chapters aim to provide a broad view of the influences that were to impact on the microcosm of the isolated Mission on Cape York Peninsula, and so provide a context for complexities of the Aboriginal/European interaction at Lockhart River Mission.

Following the introductory chapters, the Mission interaction is examined in significant periods in the history of the Mission, both highs and lows, beginning with the immediate background, the establishment period from 1924 under superintendent Harry Rowan, the hiatus of the war years, the Co-operative period under John Warby, the crisis that followed this time, and the subsequent handover of administration to the Queensland government in 1967.

1. Missionaries and Aborigines – Theoretical Perspectives

1.1. Introduction

Missionaries stand out as people motivated by ideals, by faith, by vision, by a sense of call, by the impulse to go to the people of another culture or nation with a particular message of transformation of individual and social life. Hence, missionaries are agents of change for good and/or ill. Their effectiveness, and the responses of others to them, are likely to vary according to social factors and the religious context which they address, and the openness or resistance to change within, as well as the sensitivity of the missionaries to the cultural context, to the way they handle their own cultural expectations, to the power relationship the missionaries may hold, and the degree of personal rapport and respect that they may establish.

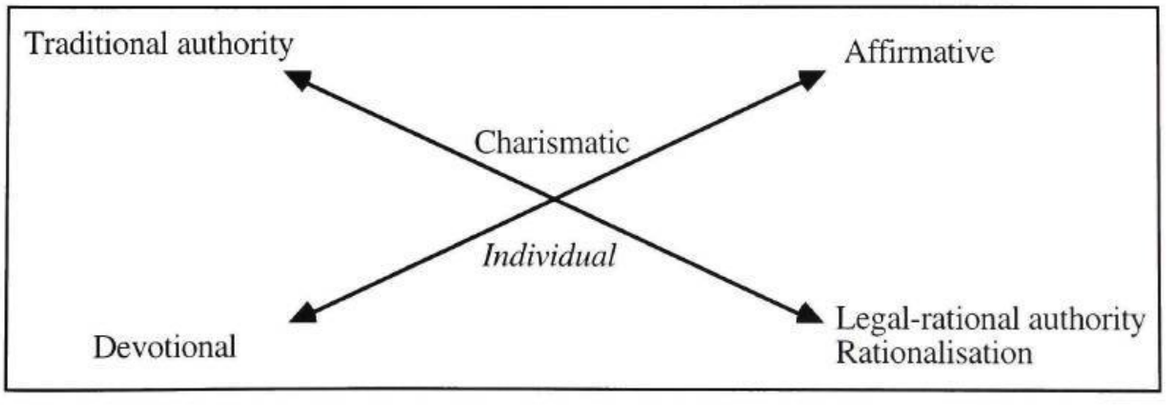
Three stands of theory will be brought together in examining the interaction of missionaries and Aborigines at Lockhart River Mission. Firstly, Church Missions with Aborigines in Australia must be considered in the context of the colonial settlement and dispossession in Australia and the "colonial social relations" (Trigger 1985:3) that arose between European capitalist society and Aboriginal pre-capitalist society. In examining the mission history of the Lockhart River Mission, the theory of internal colonialism as expounded by Wolf, Wolpe and Hartwig (the latter in relation to Aborigines) will be considered together with the involvement of the Church in the process. This study will indicate the power relations that missionaries inevitably held.

Secondly, the analysis of colonial social relations will be complemented by Max Weber's approach to social structure, status groups and authority types (legal-rational, traditional and charismatic), which offers a framework for considering the social context of the Mission, and the authority roles of missionaries as legal-rational and to some degree charismatic, *vis à vis* Aboriginal traditional authority. Weber's notion of rationalisation is

also relevant to the processes of social change, particularly on the secular side of mission activity.

Thirdly, Kenelm Burridge presents another dimension of tension or complementarity in mission history which he categorises in the terms 'Devotional' and 'Affirmative'. 'Devotional' refers to the various foundation elements of Christian spiritual life, the sacred events, commitment to God, sacrifice, asceticism, prayer, religious discipline and ritual, detachment from worldly cares, and the institutionalisation which the 'Devotional' aspect demands for its preservation. The 'Affirmative', on the other hand, refers to positive engagement with society and culture, and the efforts to improve or develop the social order in accord with the religious motivations and moralities (Burridge 1991:61). These categories will help to reveal the religious and ideological motivations of missionaries and the particular conflicts and influences that resulted in Mission life.

Both Weber and Burridge describe a person or authority type that is a stimulus to change. Weber describes this key change agent as 'charismatic', while Kenelm Burridge considers this person in term of 'individuality' (Weber 1964:358-363; Burridge 1991:54-59). Both are addressing an important factor in the precipitation of social change, and their similar notions provide a 'pivot point' for the crossover of their two perspectives. These two models may be seen to intersect with each other, with the Charismatic or Individual being a key point of contact between them.



The Christian tradition has long been aware of such tensions between tradition and institution (Devotional) on the one hand, and the challenge of prophetic or charismatic individuals engaged in revitalising social and religious life (Affirmative) on the other. The Bible shows in the Old Testament some tension between the priests and ritual institutions, and the prophets who opposed corruption and oppression, while in the New Testament there is evident a tension between traditionalists or Judaizers, seeking to maintain traditional Jewish customs among Christians, and the more charismatic Christians, particularly the Hellenists, who were breaking free of these mono-cultural restrictions. The Anglican Church is one contemporary Church that has held within its institutional life the Devotional/Affirmative tension, often seen as faith and ritual interests versus social action.

There is not just a tension, but also a complementarity, between the contrary Devotional/Affirmative approaches, which is necessary for balance and stability, and which inevitably entails accommodations as the conservative stability of institution is challenged by the varying needs and changes of particular situations. As Burridge puts it,

> For 'Devotional' and 'Affirmative' are in the act, particularly in the varied expressions of the deteriorations, also in a dialectical relation: the ever-present timelessness of the 'Devotional' against the varied contingencies in time of the 'Affirmative' (Burridge 1991:61).

1.2. Internal Colonialism

The theory of internal colonialism has emerged from theories of underdevelopment and world systems, which were, in their turn, critiques of modernisation theories. This theoretical background will be outlined first, and then the application of internal colonialism theory to Australia will be reviewed. Modernisation theories assumed that, as contact intensifies between core or developed and peripheral or underdeveloped regions, a diffusion process will occur so that the social and cultural forms of the core region will diffuse into the peripheral (Hechter 1975:6-8). "For materialists, it was technology that was needed, or capital; the only kind of ideas that were relevant were scientific knowledge and technical know-how. For idealists, it was modern values and modernizing attitudes"

(Worsley 1984:18-19). It is thus expected that the peripheral regions would achieve development in the same way as the developed nations by industrial and capitalist development. Rostow considered that such transformation would 'take-off' in three stages over two or three decades (Rostow 1963:154). The failure of such development in practice led to alternative dualist theories which saw the capitalist and pre-capitalist economies continuing side by side, with failure blamed on the latter for its 'cultural deficiencies' (Worsley 1984:20).

The optimistic expectations of modernisation theories were not realised in practice and were countered by Frank who claimed that contradictions in the capitalist system actually generate underdevelopment in peripheral regions:

> These contradictions are the expropriation of economic surplus from the many and its appropriation by the few, the polarization of the capitalist system into metropolitan center and peripheral satellites, and the continuity of the fundamental structure of the capitalist system throughout the history of its expansion and transformation, due to the persistence or re-creation of these contradictions everywhere and at all times. My thesis is that these capitalist contradictions and the historical development of the capitalist system have generated underdevelopment in the peripheral satellites whose economic surplus was expropriated, while generating economic development in the metropolitan centers which appropriate that surplus – and, further, that this process still continues (Frank 1969:3).

Wallerstein approached underdevelopment in a broader way through world system theory. He describes integrated global systems, distinguishing world empires, based on an all-embracing political control, and world economies, which do not have a single political system but do have a single economic process. In fact, he argues that capitalism as a system has flourished because it is wider than any one political entity and consequently has some structural freedom to constrain national politics. Wallerstein develops Frank's dual inequality relation to a three-fold structure of core-states, semi-peripheral areas and peripheral areas. The semi-peripheral areas are 'collection points' of skills and management that may deflect political and social pressures away from the core-states (Wallerstein 1974:347-50). Wolf (1982) depicts the tendency of peripheral cultures to be historically invisible in the title of his work, *Europe and the People Without History.*

1.2.1. Internal Colonialism in Australia

Internal Colonialism describes the narrower view of situations of underdevelopment dependency within a nation-state. It is based on the view that the relationship of ethnic, cultural, national or racial groups within some countries closely parallels the external relationship of colonial powers and colonised peoples:

> In particular, it is argued in this approach, that the 'underdeveloped' (and 'underdeveloping') condition, of subordinate ethnic and racial groups and the geographical areas they occupy within the boundaries of the state, is produced and maintained by the same mechanisms of cultural domination, political oppression, and economic exploitation which, at the international level, produce the development of the advanced capitalist states through the imperialist underdevelopment of the colonial satellites (Wolpe 1975:229).

Hechter expresses the nature of this colonial relationship more bluntly.

> Typically this involves domination by a 'racially' and culturally different foreign conquering group, imposed in the name of a dogmatically asserted racial, ethnic, or cultural superiority, on a materially inferior indigenous people. There is contact between the different cultures. The dominated society is condemned to an instrumental role by the metropolis. Finally, there is a recourse not only to force, to maintain political stability, but also to a complex of racial or cultural stereotypes, to legitimate metropolitan superordination (Hechter 1975:30).

The economy is often based on the export of a small range of primary commodities or raw materials. Coastal cities and transportation systems develop to service the conveyance of export goods from the hinterland to the coast and abroad (Hechter 1975:30-1). The pattern of Australian colonialism typically followed Hechter's description (see Morris 1989:7-8).

Hartwig usefully applies this theory to an analysis of the situation of Australian Aborigines, focussing particularly on its applicability to a situation of a non-capitalist society marginalised by overwhelming capitalism. He summarises Wolpe's points on the varied relationship of capitalist to non- or pre-capitalist modes of production. The relationship may involve –

1. The extraction of commodities in different ways.
2. The extraction, not of the product, but of labour-power. In both these instances the associated political policy is likely to turn on the domination and *conservation* of the non-capitalist societies.
3. In other instances the particular mode of economic exploitation may be accompanied by a policy aimed at or having the effect of *destroying* the non-capitalist societies, such that the producers are 'freed' of the means of production (Hartwig 1978:129).

The third point occurred in Australia through the Aboriginal experience of dispossession and death through violence and disease. Colonial settlement and the establishment of pastoral industries required appropriation of land and its resources. This meant direct confrontation with the Aboriginal economic mode which, because of its incompatibility and lack of exploitable commodities, was subject to both official and unofficial policies of destruction, "and of *resocialising* their agents for entry as sellers of labour-power, into capitalist relations of production" (Hartwig 1978:131).

The colonialists required both land and labour, but except for the some occurrence of symbiotic relationships, mainly in the cattle industry, they found that Aboriginal labour was not readily appropriated due to the different socialisation of Aborigines to subsistence hunting and gathering, their dislike of the labour-intensive agricultural and commercial modes (Attwood 1985:62-3), and their different mode of attachment to land as source of personal and group identities. The Aborigines valued "the law of place more than a law of commodity wealth" (Swain 1993:247). Colonial responses typically denigrated the humanity of Aborigines and their capacity to survive. In practice, the first stages of destruction of the Aboriginal mode were dispossession and genocide, particularly in the south, only checked by humanitarian attempts to 'smooth the dying pillow' from the 1850s, and then attempts to segregate Aborigines away from European settlement and development late in the nineteenth century, together with attempts continuing into the twentieth century to resocialise or assimilate Aborigines into the dominant society. The primary basis of the colonial relationship, then, was the "expropriation of indigenous land" (Morris 1989:7). Hartwig observes the consequences:

> Exploitation could proceed, therefore, only through the dissolution of the Aboriginal mode of production and the resocialization of its agents for entry into capitalist production relations. .. The dominant ideological and political practice of the state has therefore aimed at this effect – resocialization (Hartwig 19787:133-4).
>
> To the extent that this is successful, colonial relationships will tend to dissolve. But while it lasts or where it fails, the ideological focus will be *on that which attempts are being made to change* – the 'racial', 'tribal', etc. – the more so because any resistance to such a programme will be expressed in terms of 'withdrawal' into the security of the 'racial' or 'tribal' group, or in terms of 'nationalism', while failure will be construed as a sign of racial inferiority (Hartwig 1978:131).

The second point in Hartwig's summary occurred in Australia in the use of cheap Aboriginal labour in the pastoral industry, particularly in central and northern regions, and in the accommodations involved in some cases where pastoralists allowed Aborigines access to land of significance to them, or provided some material support in return for cheap labour (e.g. Collmann 1979a:379-381; 1979b:184-5). Wolpe describes the ideological focus of this point.

> In certain conditions of imperialist development, ideological and political domination tend to be expressed not in terms of the relations of class exploitation which they must sustain but in racial, ethnic, national, etc., terms and, in all cases, this is related to the fact that the specific mode of exploitation involves the conservation, in some form, of the non-capitalist modes of production and social organisation, the existence of which provides the foundation of that exploitation (Wolpe 1975:244).

May notes the positive side of this domination for Aboriginal people in the north Queensland cattle industry.

> In allowing themselves to be drawn into the pastoral economy, Aborigines were not abandoning their own mode of production. They were in fact trying to accommodate the European system into their own. They quickly realised that in exchange for labour on cattle stations, they could live legitimately on their own land and practise many aspects of their old life in a modified form. In any event there were some internal aspects of the Aboriginal mode which were highly resistant to capitalist penetration. These included their attitude to land, the Aboriginal communal spirit, the belief in the spirit world and the inability to compartmentalise activities such as work and leisure (May 1986:207).

Similar symbiotic situations occurred in tin mining near Cooktown, 1915 to 1940 (Anderson 1983:487), and in sea industries near Lockhart River early in the century (Chase 1981:10). In these instances, working relationships were strengthened through establishing personal relationships with 'bosses' or skippers, even through extending kinship terms to them. This minimised the power relationship through the obligations of personal relationship. As Wolf puts it, "through kinship social labor is 'locked up,' or 'embedded,' in particular relations between people" (Wolf 1982:91). These relationships, however, could not sustain increased intervention by Europeans, and Anderson distinguishes two main periods of articulation for the Kuku Yalanji, the first period of conservation enabling the maintenance of their mode by "those groups who were able to establish camps, or to maintain existing ones, in association with particular Europeans whom they could incorporate as bosses" (Anderson 1984:5). This articulation was small-

scale and fragile and collapsed into the second period of subversion to the capitalist mode as government and other European intervention increased. There were, then, factors that encouraged Aboriginal accommodation with Europeans and resocialisation of Europeans. Negative factors were the need to survive due to the loss of natural resources, while positive factors were the desires for limited engagement to maintain some aspects of cultural practices and lifestyle, and to develop useful relationships of reciprocity.

These accommodations reflects dynamic aspects of culture and change, and a useful approach to these dynamics is suggested by Wolf. He suggests that different cultures must each be viewed as a process of interrelationships between groups of people, rather than as isolated, self-contained wholes. World System theory has shown that no group of people is unaffected by interaction with others. In respect of underdeveloped peoples, Wolf comments, "The global processes set in motion by European expansion constitutes their history as well" (Wolf 1982:385). When two modes interact, the shifting of alignment of groups becomes more intense and their cultural life is more appropriately viewed as a series of fluid processes "that construct, reconstruct, and dismantle cultural elements, in response to identifiable determinants" (Wolf 1982:387). Barth observes that such interaction may reaffirm cultural or ethnic boundaries rather than diminish them (Barth 1969:9-38). Accommodation, then, does not follow inevitably or wholeheartedly from interaction. Trigger notes that accommodation may be accompanied by elements of resistance that help to maintain social and political distance and that limit European dominance in the colonial social relations (Trigger 1992:16).

These aspects of culture and relationships indicate a weakness in the theory of internal colonialism in that it does not address the micro level of social relations which may modify or determine the impact of internal colonialism, and "underestimates the part played by internal factors in promoting economic and social change between sectors of the economy or society" (Long 1975:264). Mode of production analysis is based on the economic

sphere as the primary determinant of social conditions. Weber's wider theoretical approach to social structure is used to overcome this limitation.

1.2.2. Protection and Socialisation

The colonists did not recognise Aboriginal title to land. One justification was that they did not "improve the land by their labour" (Hartwig 1978:133). As British subjects, they were expected to become 'useful' members of society through training. Popular racial thinking at the time of the early settlement included evolutionary theory, promoted by French and Scottish philosophers, that human societies "progressed from a state of nature through stages based on hunting and gathering, pastoralism, agriculture and commerce" (Williams 1986:110). This accorded with the hierarchical concept of races in a Great Chain of Being as popularised by English philosopher Locke (Reynolds 1989:107). The British faced considerable culture shock, not only in coming to terms with the native inhabitants, but in the extreme differences in land and climate to those of their homeland. It was a harsh land that they thought had to be conquered rather than accommodated to, and the same attitude was applied to Aborigines. "The bush, like the wildlife and Aborigines sheltering within, stood in the way, not only of order and light, but of progress" (Lines 1991:41).

Hence it was commonly assumed that Aborigines, at the bottom of the scale, could be trained and resocialised to adopt higher stages of life. The Aborigines, however, were unwilling to adopt the regular discipline required for agricultural and commercial activities and the NSW pastoralists in the 1840s preferred the greater reliability of convict labour (Morris 1989:13). "Their lives, like that of other non-agricultural peoples, had a rhythm centred in a subsistence economy concerned with the task of meeting immediate needs" (Attwood 1989:60).

Church leaders typically shared evolutionary assumptions, although some opposed the ready dismissal of the worth of Aborigines as against the 'superior' interests of settlers and pastoralists, "... they were challenged by a contrary evaluation, championed by evangelical

churchmen and women and humanitarian philanthropists, which held that Europeans were not entitled to ignore Aborigines' interests but instead should give them privileged treatment and help them" (Attwood 1989:82). The first efforts at education through institutional training schemes failed by the 1840s. Hartwig notes,

> Resocialization of the agents of any mode of production is likely to involve more than the first generation, especially where the process is as radical as that involved in resocializing hunter/gatherers as wage-labourers or petty commodity producers and where the attempt at resocialization has been preceded by conquest and dispossession. The effects of conquest were in any case so far-reaching that many of the schemes failed for want of an Aboriginal population *to* resocialize (Hartwig 1978:133).

Humanitarian and Church voices of protest against the destruction in the 1830s led to new Government policies in the 1840s to appoint protectors and encourage missionary and educational initiatives. The protection endeavoured to remove Aborigines from the destructive effects of European settlement, while other initiatives focussed on the resocialising or 'civilising' of Aborigines up the social ladder from hunters and gathers to tillers of the soil in a framework of European work disciplines and cultural habits.

The first missionaries were generally in accord with these policies, although with greater intention to transform Aboriginal life both socially and spiritually. Their dependency on the settled mission approach meant that they also became agents of the colonial intention to resocialise the Aborigines into more 'useful' subjects. There was some debate whether civilising or evangelising should come first, but in any case, both were seen as essential.

Mission initiatives in close proximity to European settlement essentially failed due to the continuing destructive effects of colonisation. It was only in greater isolation, particularly in remote areas, that Missions began to endure. From the point of view of Government and pastoralists it was convenient to have Aborigines contained away from European expansion, which could develop unhindered, and draw on seasonal Aboriginal labour in some situations. At the same time, it was convenient for missionaries to have Aborigines contained on reserves for the opportunity of concentrated resocialisation to their objectives of creating a totally Christian society. In practice, missionaries became the official authority, representatives of colonialism, not simply as puppets of the state, but with

higher objectives than the mere production of Aboriginal labourers. Evans, writing of Cape York Protestant Missions at the turn of the century, states,

> The Aborigines were not being prepared to gradually assimilate into wider society. The missionaries conceived of creating, as far as was humanely possible, a perfect community based on the Protestant principle of duty, godliness, moral salvation through work and industry, obedience to authority, chastity and monogamy and sobriety. ... In a pioneer environment religion was largely secularised and subservient to more pragmatic needs. Therefore, the missionaries can be seen as endeavouring to instill into the native ideal Christian values which were both alien to the Aborigines traditional culture and peripheral to that of the Europeans. Thus the Aborigines would be placed in an Evangelical Limbo, isolated from both tribal and industrial society (Evans 1969:33-34).

The objectives of missionaries were generally consonant with government policy in regard to cultural resocialisation, although they experienced ideological and financial difficulties in their middle position in the process. They also went beyond the requirements of colonial social relations in their attempts to create new Christian societies, attempting to develop Missions that were more Christian than the European society of colonial Australian at large. The various tensions, conflicts of interest and personal dimensions that arose will be examined in following chapters, and Weber's typology of authority will assist in this regard.

1.3. Weber's approach to social structure

The complexities of the colonial social relations and the small-scale intense social living of Missions involve more than economic concerns and are better addressed through Weber's approach to social structure. "The hierarchical ordering of persons within a system of social stratification is a basic aspect of Weber's view of social structure" (Johnson 1981:217). Weber, however, went beyond Marx who regarded class relations as the basis of social stratification and considered that the influence of status groups and political power are distinctive bases also.

Economic stratification gives rise to social classes which are based on the objective commonality of economic position, wealth or property. Status groups, in contrast, are based on the commonality of a shared life-style which is determined by subjective bonds of

respect and acceptance, "by shared values and customs, often by intramarriage, and by feelings of social distance from other status groups" (Johnson 1981:217-8). Johnson illustrated the contrast by the example of the prestige associated with long-standing inherited wealth which does not readily admit those with new entrepreneurial wealth. Subjective bonds also tie people together in low status groups:

> These dynamics also apply to those at the bottom of the prestige hierarchy. They are bound together by a shared sense of being excluded and looked down on and by the necessity of assuming a deferential role towards their superiors. In other words, they "know their place," even though they may struggle to change it. (Johnson 1981:218).

A third influence in social stratification is political power, which may co-incide or cross over class and status, but is analytically distinct. Weber takes a broad view of power as "the ability to impose one's will despite the resistance of others. Persons may strive to attain power for its own sake or as a means of enhancing their economic position or their status" (Johnson 1981:218). Weber narrows down this broad concept of power to that of legitimate domination or authority. This he defines as power exercised through legitimacy, that is, when those who obey the direction or influence of another do so because they believe or accept that the person has a legitimate right to exercise this power. "Hence every genuine form of domination implies a minimum of voluntary compliance, that is, an *interest* (based on ulterior motives or genuine acceptance) in obedience" (Weber 1968 I:212). Those seeking a continuing exercise of power usually strive to maintain or develop acceptance of the legitimacy of their power.

Weber distinguishes three pure or ideal types of legitimate domination in which the grounds of legitimacy are termed rational/legal, traditional or charismatic (Weber 1968 I:215). This typology is used as a method to delineate the complexities of interactions and motives of people involved in the establishment of the Lockhart River Mission. In order to use this typology as an analytical tool it is necessary to understand Weber's intentions in defining 'ideal types'.

1.4 Weber's ideal types of authority

Weber developed the model of 'ideal types' in order to compare and generalise sociologically. He formed an ideal type as a synthesis of typical aspects of particular phenomena, forming them into a unified analytical construct. Johnson states,

> The intellectual construct may ignore or distort certain aspects of the empirical phenomenon, but this is inevitable, since social reality is far too complex to be grasped in all its complexity. Once the ideal type is constructed, it can be used as a measuring rod to assess the extent to which phenomena conform and as a theoretical concept in the development of research hypotheses (Johnson 1981:212).

Weber wrote,

> Historical research faces the task of determining in each individual case, the extent to which this ideal-construct approximates to or diverges from reality . . . (in Thompson & Tunstall 1981:63-4).

Trigger used Weber's approach in his analysis of power relations at Doomadgee Aboriginal settlement and he saw the preferred approach to be a process of observing data and how it differs from the ideal type, and then generating hypotheses to account for the data (Trigger 1985:11-12).

The Traditional claim to legitimate authority rests "on an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of the status of those exercising authority under them . . ." (Weber 1968 I:215). Traditional authority is maintained through a male kinship line and accepted customs of deference and obedience to a specific person (Johnson 1981:221). Aboriginal traditional authority practices of this kind were still significant when the Lockhart River Mission began in 1924, despite the extent of outside contact.

Charismatic authority refers to the authority of particular individuals who provide at a particular time a significant leadership which stimulates a change of direction or renewal of life within a community of people. This authority is based on the people's response to particular gifts of inspiration or leadership (Weber 1968 I:241-2). Typical examples are prophets, revolutionary leaders, visionaries, etc. In the context of the Lockhart River Mission various elements of such charismatic authority will be considered: on the one

hand, in Aboriginal people pressing for a Mission, traditional leaders promoting change, mission personnel with an agenda for change who gain acceptance; on the other hand, in Aboriginal people resisting change, actively or passively, and in individuals stimulating cultural and ceremonial revival.

Legal-rational authority depends on established rules of conduct rather than on personal relationships. This authority is managed through, and fosters, bureaucratic structures (Weber 1968 I:217-221). This was the type of framework of authority that missionaries, as agents of resocialisation, operated under and sought to establish in the Mission life. In his typology, Weber contrasts the impersonal nature of legal-rational authority with the foundation of personal relationships in the other two types. Traditional authority involves obligatory obedience, while charismatic authority involves a voluntary acceptance of the quality of leadership. However, in practice, the ideal types are not found in pure form, but as a mixture of types in varying degrees. Weber stresses that there is no evolution or progress between types, but they are manifested in a flux of various combination in different situations (Weber 1968 III:1133). For example, legal-rational authority figures may also exercise some charismatic appeal. Similarly, traditionally-based leaders may also occupy leadership roles in a legal-rational system, and may have charismatic impact as well. Johnson notes,

> In view of the interdependence among the three authority patterns, utilising these concepts in empirical data analysis should involve attempting to determine the dominant pattern and also the way in which three types are interrelated and the degree to which they mutually support or undermine one another (Johnson 1981:229).

In the Lockhart River Mission context, there was the obvious presence of traditional and legal-rational forms, and the tension between them, as well as charismatic authority in individual missionaries and Aborigines. I will argue that shifts of control between traditional and legal-rational authority were mediated either by the power of enforcement of mission authorities, or more effectively through charismatic elements in good personal relationships.

1.4.1. Legitimation of authority

The question of the legitimation of authority is relevant here. Weber's definitions of domination assume legitimacy through the ability to elicit obedience, and further, that this obedience arises from a positive commitment to or acceptance of the authority – "the command is accepted as a 'valid' norm" (Weber 1968 III:946). Johnson notes,

> The dominance patterns thus reflect primarily a structure of *authority*, not a structure of *power*. Power is the *ability* to carry out one's will despite opposition; authority is the *right* to exercise influence as supported by the rules and norms underlying the social order. The exercise of authority depends on the willingness of subordinates to comply with orders of the authority figure. The degree of willingness varies in different situations. Furthermore, those in positions of authority naturally have an interest in strengthening beliefs in their legitimacy (Johnson 1981:220).

The element of coercion or disciplined enforcement of authority has to be considered carefully in the use of Weber's typology, as he did not clearly distinguish the boundary between legitimate authority and illegitimate or oppressive authority. Acceptance of authority will also include acceptance of sanctions or the means of enforcement of that authority, but this can obscure a measure of false consciousness and a degree of coercion that is not legitimate in Weber's terminology (cf Trigger 1985:27-30).

There is, however, a coercive element in Weber's acceptance of the notion of 'rational discipline' as a necessary aspect of legitimate authority, although with a rather military perspective. Noting the transitory nature of charisma and its fate "to give way to powers of tradition or of rational socialisation", and the accompanying lessening of "individual action", Weber goes on,

> And of all these powers that lessen the importance of individual action, the most irresistible is rational discipline (in Gerth & Mills 1946:253).

He describes status groups maintaining their rule "only by means of a very strict discipline" (in Gerth & Mills 1946:254). Structures of rational discipline inculcate habitual and routinised behaviour in association with motives of ethics and conscience. There may be elements of coercion or sanction in such structures of discipline, but they are legitimate to the extent that the community accepts their validity as part of the authority structure. As Parkin notes,

> In the typical case, a combination of physical coercion, moral persuasion, and material inducements would be employed in various degrees (Parkin 1982:75).

Weber's thinking reflects a top-down sociology of command, rather than a grassroots view of compliance (Parkin 1982:79). He thus reflects the perceptions of those in authority, rather than of those expected to obey. While Weber does not elaborate on the boundaries of legitimacy and illegitimacy in regard to coercion and the manner in which positive compliance is gained, he does draw the line in the case of slavery in which there is no escape from the discipline imposed. He does, however, allow some element of force in other circumstances, "after the 'ethical' qualities of duty and conscientiousness have failed" (in Gerth & Mills 1946:255). Weber states,

> Loyalty may be hypocritically simulated by individuals or by whole groups on purely opportunistic grounds, or carried out in practice for reasons of material self-interest. Or, people may submit from individual weakness and helplessness because there is no acceptable alternative. But these considerations are not decisive for the classification of types of domination. What is important is the fact that in a given case the particular claim to legitimacy is to a significant degree and according to its type treated as "valid"; that this fact confirms the position of the persons claiming authority and that it helps to determine the choice of means of its exercise (Weber 1968 I:214).

The point at which excessive coercion oversteps the boundary of legitimate authority to become coercive power is therefore outside Weber's typology and becomes a matter of interpretation in a particular context.

Parkin makes a distinction between normative compliance by which people freely accept the worth of a particular authority and voluntarily accept its domination, and compliance that arises from powerlessness:

> Oppressed social groups sometimes absorb ideas about the superiority of their masters as a form of adaptations to their plight. Under certain circumstances coercive powers can thus be employed in such a way as to bend fractious hearts and minds towards allegiance (Parkin 1982:76).

This may have applied to some degree in the formation of the Lockhart River Mission as people voluntarily placed themselves under the protective authority of the Mission and accepted its disciplines, including baptism. Once the Mission was established, it appears that some coercion by police and missionaries was exercised to gather more people in, to

remove the more fractious and to maintain their authority (Chase 1980:113-117). Unacceptable coercion certainly occurred later in the superintendency of J Currie (see chapter 8).

In a lecture on *Politics as a Vocation* Weber refers to three types of compliance which roughly correspond to the three types of authority, vis, empathy, inspiration and persuasion through rational argument (Parkin 1982:79). Other possible reasons for compliance are briefly listed by Weber:

> In a concrete case the performance of a command may have been motivated by the ruled's own conviction of its propriety, or by a sense of duty, or by fear, or by 'dull' custom, or by a desire to obtain some benefit for himself (in Parkin 1982:79-80).

Trigger supports Marxist criticism that the concept of ideology is not given sufficient weight in the process of legitimacy of dominant power being accepted by the dominated, and suggests that elements of ideology need to be considered also to support the Weber's typology of authority (Trigger 1985:29-30). The point is well taken, and issues of religious ideology are significant in the analysis of Mission history in this thesis.

1.4.2. Tsimshian example

It is evident that in the establishment of the Lockhart River Mission that there was an initial desire for and acceptance of the protective framework of a Mission on the part of some individuals. This is comparable to the positive desire of the Tsimshian Indians of Canada for a Methodist Mission at Port Simpson in British Colombia both in response to Christian contact and conversion experiences, and also as an attempt to adopt new ways and be accepted in Canadian society:

> For the Tsimshian, conversion was a deliberate and conscious attempt to embrace cultural forms which they believed would guarantee their participation in late nineteenth-century British Colombia society (Bolt 1992:106).

Bolt notes that pragmatic and materialist as well as religious reasons were involved in a deliberate decision for cultural change. He also challenges the common view that missionaries simply enforced religious and social change:

> Indeed, many missionaries were powerful individuals, but often there is little appreciation for the fact that they would have been unable to carry out their programs had Native people not allowed them to do so. There are numerous examples in the history of missions where, after years of ceaseless toil, the missionaries had little return for all their efforts (Bolt 1992:107).

Accounts of the missionary work of William Duncan and Thomas Crosby among the Tsimshian (Bolt 1992, Murray 1985, Usher 1974) indicate such positive elements of native acceptance, the development of relationships and dependencies, as well as tensions that arose from deeper levels of cultural conflict between missionaries and Indians. Despite such tensions, missionaries frequently upheld Indian causes, and mutual loyalties remained strong.

1.4.3. Lockhart River Mission

As with the Tsimshian Indians, particular Aborigines of the Lockhart River region, who had experienced Mission work in the Torres Straits, saw the potential benefits for their people in a Mission and were instrumental in mediating this cultural change, may be seen in a charismatic light in Weber's terms. The movement they instigated represented a radical openness to change that involved the realisation that a fully traditional lifestyle was no longer possible, and the reasoning that the Mission framework offered the best way of coming to terms with the colonisers and being accepted by them.

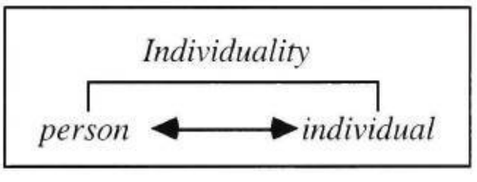
Cultural change was not so simple, however, and many deeper level cultural attitudes that continued came into conflict with new expectations. As Mission life became established, stress points of cultural change occurred, resulting in some coercive action, e.g. the first superintendent (Harry Rowan) broke fighting spears and banned them, enforced cultural change, proscribed language use and ceremony, and pressured people to come into the Mission community (Chase 1980:116). While the core population came from Giblet's camp, other peripheral groups were brought in, with the potential for friction between them and different levels of acceptance of change.

Initial expectations were idealistic on the part of both Aborigines and missionaries. Traditional values and authority came into conflict with European values and the legal-rational framework brought by the missionaries. Such tensions were at times mediated and mollified through the personal element between particular missionaries and Aborigines. While some new forms of religious ceremony and behaviour were accepted, other cultural attitudes and practices remained hidden or contained in the social closure of the Aboriginal groups. Rowan's attitude appeared to soften in time, and people such as Charles Cook and later, John Warby, established good personal relationships which drew accepting responses to their elements of change.

1.5. Kenelm Burridge's approach

1.5.1. Individuality

Burridge uses the term *individuality* to describe the process whereby a *person*, that is, a typically conservative conformist, moves to a position of standing aside from the conventional moralities as an *individual* to express insight, critique or movement for change, and then, the role completed, return to being a conventional *person*. (He uses italics for these key terms to distinguish them from normal usage.) This terminology may be depicted thus:



> *Individuality* is anchored in the *person*, the conservative conformist demonstrating and renewing given or traditional moralities. Upon perceiving a truth in particular events, however, a *person* may stand on the events and the truth elicited, become an *individual* through a critique of given moralities and so become poised to transcend, transform, or change or merely negate the given moralities. Whether what follows is a mild exhortation or an activist changing the moralities, sooner or later a return to the *person* is usual (Burridge 1991:55).

Burridge's notion of the *individual* is similar to Weber's ideal type charismatic authority figure. Burridge's approach, however, is broader than strong or significant or inspired leadership, for his 'mild exhortation' would include the occasional insight, lateral thinking

or critique contributed to processes of review and change within an organisation or society. He notes that *individuality* may have the potential for charismatic exercise of power, but this does not have to follow.

Within western society, and often in a Christian environment, such *individuality* is a possibility for anyone, and an expectation for the many who exercise leadership in society. This he calls *generalized individuality*. Christian missionaries are *individuals* in this way. *Individuality*, however, may stand in opposition to conservative or traditional forces, and in some societies may be a source of instability, particularly where there are institutions or positions in society that are guardians of morality:

> . . . a dynamic making for change and/or transcendence, *generalized individuality* also makes for disorder, disagreements and quarrels, apparently anomalous collective action, and often catastrophe (Burridge 1991:56).

It follows that *individuals* may be bearers of high morality and become agents for change that is beneficial, or they may unwittingly initiate far-reaching social change that ultimately may be more destructive than good. On the other hand, they may have no strong morality, but act destructively simply out of frustration or rebelliousness.

Another point of significance that Burridge makes is that *individuality*, particularly that produced from Christian denominations, may lead to political power and the adoption of a holistic approach to society that becomes rigid and enforced, and hence be in opposition to further *individuality*.

> Entering a moral critique easily becomes the afflated conviction that only oneself has a grip on the truth of things. In itself, however, *individuality* is neutral, a device: *persons* becoming *individuals* brings to the relation what is in them to bring. The result is that *individuality* is not only creative but may also produce a variety of evils. If good may come out of an evil, and that which if foolish or imprudent refined to become something more noble, the significant feature to be grasped is the scope for constructive as well as destructive change that *generalized individuality* affords (Burridge 1991:56-7).

The latter process may be particularly destructive when missionaries carry their own cultural practices and expression of the faith, in a way that is confused or enmeshed with the basic elements of Christianity. If some material elements of the missionary's culture

are seen to be desirable, then the desire for these may be ulterior motives that enhance the apparent success of the missionary. This may have happened to a degree at Lockhart River and other North Australian Missions. On the other hand, if the European is already discredited, the missionary endeavour is bound to fail, as was typical of mission endeavour in southern Australia due to the destructive effects of European settlement (Harris 1990). Between these two extremes, there may be also more carefully introduced change that both wins acceptance and is effective in improving the circumstances of life. It was the intention of many a Mission in Australia to alleviate the destructive effects of dispossession in a way that was positive and life-enhancing, but often they failed due to other external influences.

1.5.2. Devotional and Affirmative

In order to systematise the varieties of missionary endeavour, Burridge introduces two further terms – 'Devotional' and 'Affirmative'. These terms depict the complementary aspects of the spiritual dimension of belief, piety, withdrawal from the world (Devotional), and the human dimension of active expression of the implications of faith in the world for interpersonal relations and the well-being of life in community and nation (Affirmative). Together, these terms convey the wholeness of Christian Faith, grounded in God's love and expressed in human living. Separately, they depict two major spheres of emphasis that may be in tension with each other:

> The 'Devotional', then, refers to a dedicated regard for the Godhead, the mystery of God's love, the sacred events that reveal the nature of that love, devotion to Jesus Christ, the *logos*, the word made flesh; to asceticism, sacrifice, transcending the Ego, surrender to God's will, the spiritual life; to prayer and moral disciplines in which are secreted the moral exemplar, detachment from status and worldly cares, the search for a union with the divine. All these features require disciplines and some sort of institutionalization if they and their meaning are to be preserved down the generations. Realization of a metanoia and transcendence, worked at or experienced in a decisive moment, may be presumed. In the 'Affirmative', on the other hand, are all those features that flow from an affirmation of the world: engagement in culture and the social order with the determination to make relations and relationships more appropriate and felicitious in relation to the metaculture [universal elements] (Burridge 1991:61).

While the 'Devotional' depicts the typical religious sphere of belief and devotion, the 'Affirmative' represents the more complex sphere of interaction with the secular, and gives rise to ambiguities, accommodations and moral dilemmas that in turn may give rise to oppositions and conflicts, rather than complementarity with the 'Devotional'. Burridge makes the important point that if complementarity is not maintained, then the 'Affirmative' may lose its roots in the Devotional' and move towards secularised practice. Rather than regarding secularisation as a modern phenomenon, Burridge considers that there has always been a pressure upon Christianity with the movement between the 'Devotional' and the 'Affirmative' in the processes of conversion to faith and activity in the world. The latter may become a preoccupying secular concern disassociated from its religious foundations. Alternatively, difficulties in the 'Affirmative' may reinforce the 'Devotional':

> At first, because they are viewed through the lens of the 'Devotional', features in the 'Affirmative' present themselves as they are: as ambiguities and dilemmas to be confronted directly in productive tension. This is followed by familiar alternations, and then, finally, worldly interests being the more forcefully experienced, 'Devotional' components are neglected and rerationalized as irrelevant, merely preparatory to the adventure into a much wider cultural world, the better part of practical virtue (Burridge 1991:158).

Such dual emphases and trends may be evidenced in Mission work where a holistic approach is taken. At Lockhart River Mission both emphases were present from the beginnings with the attempts to transform Aboriginal life both spiritually and socially. Just how well they were integrated depended on the approach of mission personnel from time to time. Lack of funding and staff often meant that both aspects could not be adequately covered, particularly when there was no Chaplain for long periods. Then the more practical side of developing community infrastructure and meeting health, education and welfare needs tended to predominate while the religious sphere tended to slip into minimal institutional conventions.

For some periods, the Chaplains were Torres Strait Islanders who brought their particular cultural influence and supported the settled style of life through gardening and fishing. European Chaplains were few, generally presenting an Anglo-Catholic ritualist approach to

Church life, and at times caught up with the administration demands of the community life. The extra tension between the 'Devotional' and 'Affirmative' aspects in this microcosm may have contributed to short-lived terms of service by staff, whereas those who endured appear to be those who most integrated the two.

1.6. Rationalisation/Secularisation

The secularisation possibility that Burridge describes is comparable to Weber's thinking on rationalisation. Weber saw rationalisation as an inevitable outcome of the growth of legal-rational authority and its bureaucratic structures. These structures give predominance to goal-oriented rational action (*Zweckrational*) and less dependency on value-oriented action (*Wertrational*), affective or emotional action, and traditional action based on custom (Thompson 1971:95-6). Goal-oriented rational action is marked by specialisation of knowledge, depersonalisation of authority and economy, and increased control over people and the natural world through technological advances (Brubaker 1984:30-35).

Other forms of action, particularly value-oriented action arising from family, community and religious values, may still act as a counter to the progress of goal-oriented action. The formal or pure type of rational action may in practice be favoured or limited politically by laws which protect either the rich or the weak and disadvantaged:

> . . characterized by a high degree of formal rationality, the modern capitalist economic order maximises the values of calculability, efficiency and impersonality but is deeply inhospitable to egalitarian, fraternal and caritative values (Brubaker 1984:42).

In the Lockhart River Mission context, the weakening of traditional authority also weakened religious tradition, and while new religious values were introduced and adopted, they did not form the same primacy for social values. The Mission bureaucracies initiating social change tended to be more caught up in goals to be achieved and less dependent on religious values other than the personal motivation of missionaries.

It is evident that socio-religious values as a mix of traditional and new attitudes remained important for the Aboriginal people, but with a different viewpoint from that of Mission staff and somewhat disconnected from the contingencies of everyday life in the Mission. This divergence, and the predominating legal-rational authority in the Mission, both gave impetus towards the rationalisation/secularisation of life, resulting in committed faith by the few, and conventional, nominal and even superstitious religious practice by the many. Reversal of this trend depended on the activity of *individuals* contributing charismatically to a re-invigoration of religious values, whether traditional or new.

2. Historical Models of Mission

In this chapter the meanings of 'mission' and 'Mission' are defined, and an overview of the development of mission methods or paradigms is outlined as a background to understanding both the motivations of missionaries in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and the more anthropologically informed approaches of today, as well as to illuminate tensions inherent in Christian mission as defined in Burridge's categories of 'Devotional' and 'Affirmative'.

2.1. Mission

The word 'mission' is used widely today in both religious and secular contexts, often with the basic meaning of 'assignment'. Among Christians, the traditional meaning that developed in the sixteenth century included the elements of authorised sending out with a message to receptors outside the membership of the Church. The Jesuits were the first to use it in terms of the spread of the Christian Faith among people (including Protestants) who were not members of the Catholic Church (Bosch 1992:1). Hence, the impetus of 'mission' was towards the conversion of unbelievers, which usually meant going beyond the borders of countries whose citizens were all counted as Christians through baptism. Such mission readily became enmeshed with colonial expansion.

Mission, then, has been used to describe this process undertaken by missionaries, and also to refer to geographical or communal areas of mission activity. Other subsidiary meanings have been to refer to a local congregation or region dependent on the support of a more established centre, and to a special series of services aiming to deepen or spread the faith in a particular time and place. This account focuses primarily on 'mission' defined as the rationale of the outreach of the Church and its missionaries, as well as 'Mission' referring to a community which is specifically and organisationally the object of 'mission'.

The message of Christian mission is commonly encompassed in the word 'gospel' which is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word *godspell,* meaning 'good tidings' and later 'God-story'. Most Bible versions use 'gospel' to translate the New Testament Greek work *euangelion,* meaning 'good news', the primary reference being to Jesus Christ as the fulfiller of God's promises of salvation (Davis & Gehman 1944:208; Richardson 1957:100). This good news refers to an interpretation of the total event of Jesus Christ – to the belief that Jesus Christ, as Son of God, came into human life as Saviour to reveal the reign of God, that, through his death and resurrection, he has brought forgiveness of sins for all mankind, reconciliation with God the Father and with one another, gives the gifts of the Holy Spirit for service and mission, and the gift of eternal life, and that these benefits are appropriated through faith. Consequences of the gospel are that believers become disciples who live by the objectives of loving God and one another after Christ's example, seeking justice and peace in the world, and sharing the good news through the community of faith, the Church.

This gospel is essentially universal in scope, and this means that the Christian Faith "is intrinsically missionary" (Bosch 1992:8). "On the day of Pentecost Christ, through the Spirit, throws open the doors and thrusts the disciples out into the world" (Bosch 1992:40). On the other hand, "The Christian faith is intrinsically incarnational" (Bosch 1992:191) and this means that the faith will in some way become 'enfleshed' by the particular context it enters, unless it remains totally foreign. These points illustrate a fundamental tension in Christian mission between the universal and the local, and the difficulties of re-contextualising or transforming one local or cultural expression of the faith into another local expression. Mission becomes oppressive when the distinction is not recognised and mission is culturally imperialistic.

David Bosch describes stages of change in contextualization as paradigms, drawing on the ideas of Thomas Kuhn (1970) about scientific development which he saw happening in leaps of insight or revolutions, rather than in the steady crawl of incremental research. The

new model that emerges by revolutionary change is the paradigm. Bosch notes that in theology the old paradigm may not be fully replaced, but continue to live on in some groups (Bosch 1992:185-6). He analyses these paradigms according to six major historico-theological subdivisions as suggested by Hans Küng, namely,

- the apocalyptic paradigm of primitive Christianity
- the Hellenistic paradigm of the patristic period
- the medieval Roman catholic paradigm
- the Protestant (Reformation) paradigm
- the modern Enlightenment period
- the emerging ecumenical paradigm

The following outline of distinctive approaches to mission in the first five periods draws mainly on Bosch's account in *Transforming Mission.* In summary, mission approaches reflect the shifts from the faith movement of early Christianity, which won gradual acceptance in the face of opposition, to a gradual institutionalisation of practice and leadership, to increased institutionalisation through official recognition by emperors, to the compromise of the Church to secular powers, to the dominance of the spiritual over the secular in the Middle Ages, and the amalgamation of religious and secular powers in colonial expansion. The process then is reversed through the Reformation's spiritual and social challenge to institution to return to the primacy of faith and Scripture, the rise of voluntarist faith movements, and the secular challenge of the Enlightenment which began to break the nexus of Church and State, opening the way for renewal of faith movements either in reaction to, or in accommodation to, changes in society. Approaches to mission in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries varied among the denominations. Those most closely aligned to State authorities, notably Anglicans and Catholics, generally reflected the ideals of the marriage of Church and State, while other Protestant groups were more influenced by revival movements and pietistic faith.

2.2. *Paradigms of Mission*

2.2.1. Early Christian period

In the first century, Christianity was primarily a movement of faith rather than an organisation (Nolan 1987:134) and was characterised by charismatic leadership, firstly of Jesus and then his core group of disciples. The New Testament depicts the mission of Jesus as inclusive and holistic:

> . . . it embraces both the poor and the rich, both the oppressed and the oppressor, both the sinners and the devout. His mission is one of dissolving alienation and breaking down walls of hostility, of crossing boundaries between individuals and groups (Bosch 1992:28).

Jesus' strategy of mission included the calling and apprenticing of a band of twelve disciples (followers in a process of learning). They were later called apostles, meaning those sent out with a message, and it was they who comprised the initial leadership of the early Church. The substance of their initial message was "Christ is risen" and "Jesus is Lord" (over all reality) (Bosch 1992:148). This transforming vision, and belief in his continuing empowering presence through the Holy Spirit, were the charismatic foundations of their mission.

It was not the aim of the early Christian mission to form a separate religion, but to renew Judaism and gradually incorporate other peoples (Gentiles). Conflict developed between conservative Aramaic-speaking Jewish Christians and more liberal Greek-speaking Jewish Christians (Hellenists) (Bosch 1992:42). The latter became the centre of the Jesus movement of the first century. This movement grew in a dynamic way through preaching, teaching, baptising, and incorporating disciples into the solidarity of a faith community. This faith community was as yet relatively unstructured as a Church.

Paul became the unique missionary and theologian of the early Church, and his theology developed out of the practicalities of his missionary experience and the needs and problems of new local church groups. Leadership at this stage reflected the early charismatic or

enthusiastic stage of the Christian movement with local pastors and a mobile ministry of apostles, prophets and evangelists (Bosch 1992:120). The exemplary quality of life of the new Christians was the mainspring of mission at this time. Morality for Christians was religiously-based. "Christians were expected to belong, body and soul, to Christ, and this was to show in their conduct" (Bosch 1992:192).

2.2.2. The Patristic Period

The Patristic period refers to the time from the end of the first century to the eighth century when notable teachers or 'Fathers' had a crucial role in the formation of Christian doctrine and in the categorisation of other views as heretical (Cross 1963: 1026-7). It was thus a period of growing institutionalisation of the young Christian Faith, which underwent a significant transformation as it "entered the Graeco-Roman world" (Bosch 1992:190). This transformation affected not only the ritual, rules and organisation of the Church, but also its understanding of its foundation beliefs under the impact of Greek culture and philosophy.

> The pervasive impact of Greek philosophy on the infant Christian movement can, however, best be observed in the overgrowing tendency to define the faith and systematize theology. The God of the Old Testament and primitive Christianity came to be identified with the general idea of God of Greek metaphysics; God is referred to as Supreme Being, substance, principle, unmoved mover. Ontology (God's being) became more important than history (God's deeds) (Bosch 1992:194).

Early apocalyptic expectations in the imminent return of Christ to inaugurate the kingdom of God were not realised, and this led to a spiritualisation of the kingdom – away from the historical to the heavenly and eternal understanding. There was a significant shift away from the historical Jesus and the expectation of a future resolution of conflicts and corruption in the 'age to come', to an emphasis on metaphysical categories.

> People's expectations came to be focussed on heaven rather than on this world and God's involvement in history; instead of looking forward to the future they looked up to eternity ... a radical spiritualization of the Christ-event (Bosch 1992:197).

By the late second century, Christians were becoming more socially acceptable, and Christian theologians, such as Clement and Origen, could match the Greek philosophers. The Church was becoming the bearer of culture even before persecutions stopped.

> The advent of Constantine put a seal on this development. Henceforth Christians and they alone would be upwardly mobile and cultured. They dominated life in the cities. Non-Christians were now looked down upon as the unenlightened ones; they were "pagans" (*pagani,* "those who lived in rural areas") or "heathen" ("those whose homes were on the heath") (Bosch 1992:193).

The rapid spread of the Christian faith can also be attributed to the slow decay of the Roman Empire at the time and the widespread sense of fatalism among the population which provided openings for the new faith. Faith also decayed, however, as the Church and its leadership rapidly became institutionalised, and the sense of fervour and outgoing mission declined to be became replaced by zeal for the spread of the culture of the Church. The freedom of the faith movement had become the institutionalised religious culture of the Church. "To the church paganism and the absence of 'civilization' were synonymous, and mission identical to the spread of culture" (Bosch 1992:201). The monastic movement, however, began to flourish by the end of the third century and "the monk succeeded the martyr as the expression of the unqualified witness and protest against worldliness" (Bosch 1992:202).

2.2.2.1. Christendom

The year 313CE marked a crucial change in direction for the Christian Church. In that year the "joint emperors Constantine and Licinius, meeting at Milan, revised the Empire's two-century old policy toward Christianity and declared that it would henceforth be tolerated." (Bosch 1992:202). The Church tried to maintain an 'other-worldly focus but the State soon entwined the Church in its own objectives. The bold creed of the first Christians that 'Jesus is Lord' "ended in a compromise where the emperor was to rule in 'time' and Christ in 'eternity'" (Bosch 1992:202). From this time the Churches were largely compromised to the state, both in the Eastern Orthodox Church centred on Constantinople and the Western Catholic Church centred on Rome. (The Great Schism between the two occurred in 1054.) The new political patronage was enhanced in 380 when Theodosius proscribed all religions except Christianity. However, their protection was short-lived as Rome was sacked by the Goths in 410. This precipitated a considerable crisis to the Church and brought forth the talents of Augustine of Hippo (354-430), who responded both to the

political crisis as well as to the threats posed by the differing teachings of Pelagius (imitating Christ brought perfection) and the Donatists (purity through strict separation of Church and State) (Bosch 1992:215-8). Mission became heavily centred upon the institution of the Church.

The establishment of the Christian Faith as the official religion of the Empire resolved the tension or dynamic between inspiration and institution, prophet and priest, spontaneity and ritual, in favour of the institutional side (Burridge's 'Devotional'), which, with this dynamic suppressed, became increasingly hierarchical, dominating and oppressive. As spiritual leadership became entwined with secular leadership, the integrity of the Church became corrupted by power and privilege to the detriment of its spiritual roots and strength which the Donatists represented. Such tension returned in later times between exclusivist holiness groups and established Churches which generally recognise the weaknesses of all their members and their ongoing dependence on the grace of God. The dynamic is best retained within a Church when it is free to control its own affairs, be responsive to faith inspiration, and to be prophetic and compassionate in its stance towards governments and society. The potential for this was not restored until the world-view changes brought by the Enlightenment. As Newbigin put it in his positive approach to secularisation,

> I think there is a real continuity between the prophetic resistance to the claims of a sacral kingship, the Christian refusal to acknowledge the divinity of the Emperor, and the secular spirit which refuses to acknowledge the final authority of any sacred tradition or any official ideology which overrides the right and the dignity of the human person (Newbigin 1966:37).

2.2.3. Roman Catholic Church of the Middle Ages (600-1500)

The western Church centred on Rome, diverged increasingly from the eastern Church, and the dominant language became Latin. The impetus for the Church-centred paradigm of this period was set by Augustine in his writings prior to this period.

Augustine's monumental work in 22 volumes, *De Civitate Dei* (City of God), was instrumental in the systematising of the Church/State relationship and in the separation of sacred and secular realms. He envisaged two 'societies' of 'cities' existing side by side,

the 'City of God' and the 'earthly city'. The eternal City of God is represented by the pilgrim people of God and in subsequent centuries "the city of God fused virtually completely with that of the empirical Roman Catholic Church" (Bosch 1992:220).

Augustine declared the earthly city to be subservient to the city of God and established the "notion of the supremacy and independence of the spiritual power over against the political authorities" (Bosch 1992:221). In later centuries this was supremely expressed in the Papacy. In practice, Augustine's theology led to the Church having a privileged status in society and being compromised to secular power, emperor and pope becoming dependent on each other. Inevitably, the mission of the Church became tainted with the element of coercion in winning converts. It was Augustine also who developed the notion of a 'just war', that is, war conducted for self-defence with the purpose of peace, not conquest (Bosch 1992:223). Gregory the Great, two centuries later, moved this notion further towards justifying aggressive war for the defence of Christendom and indirectly for subsequent missionary activity under the peaceful protection of the state. In some cases, indirect purpose gave way to direct wars to conquer others for Christendom (Bosch 1992:224).

In the third century, Cyprian had stated, in the context of conflict over doctrine, that there is no salvation outside the Church. In 1302 Pope Boniface VIII universalised this by stating, "We declare, state, define, and proclaim that it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman pontiff" (Bosch 1992:218). Heretics and schismatics were consigned along with unbelievers to eternal damnation. This divine imperialism was reflected in a change in baptismal practice from one in which careful preparation was required, to one of baptising as soon as possible, so that the new Christian became under an ecclesiastical discipline designed to conform the person's life to the expected pattern. The view of baptism as indelible and irreversible reinforced the control of the Church (Bosch 1992:219). The mentality of compulsion gained some justification from a convenient interpretation of a verse from Jesus' parable of the wedding banquet.

"Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled" (Luke 14:23 NRSV).

Gregory's defensive wars later developed into Crusades in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries which were seen to be God's will to combat the threatening menace of Islam. To kill a heathen or apostate was now considered pleasing to God (Bosch 1992:224-5).

2.2.3.1. The Crusades and Colonisation

Despite the Crusades, Islam continued to present persistent opposition to Christendom and cut Europe off from the rest of the world during the Middle Ages. By the end of the 15th century sea routes to India and the Americas were discovered around this land blockade. "These events . . . . . inaugurated a completely new period in world history: Europe's colonisation of the peoples of Africa, Asia and the Americas" (Bosch 1992:226). The Crusade mentality carried over into the consequent colonization of non-Christian peoples. Western culture and religion became enhanced to western eyes as peoples of strange cultures and languages were conquered. These apparently inferior people became fodder for the slave market. The assumed superiority of westerners "over all others became more and more firmly entrenched and regarded as axiomatic" (Bosch 1992:227). This colonial expansion revealed millions of people outside the fold of the Church, and without baptism, assumed to be heading for eternal punishment. Pope Alexander VI, under the medieval assumption of his supreme authority over the entire world,

> divided the world outside Europe between the kings of Portugal and Spain, granting them full authority over all the territories they had already discovered as over those still to be discovered. .... Colonialism and mission, as a matter of course, were interdependent; the right to have colonies carried with it the duty to Christianize the colonize (Bosch 1992:227).

The colonization of Latin America involved a dual conquest. Mercantile interests of Spain and Portugal ensured military and economic conquest based upon subjugation and slave labour. The second conquest was cultural and spiritual.

> The "other" (Indians and blacks) must become the "same" (Iberian Christians). In the dominant ideology of the time, the *orbis Christianus* represents the order willed

> by God on earth. Popes, kings and princes must spread this order by every means at their command. ... it meant making them Portuguese and Spanish (Boff 1992:63-4).

Boff identifies four points in their colonial theology –

- the reign of God is identified with the church
- the church is identified with the Christian world – *orbis Christianus*
- The Christian world is the only valid world
- anything different is identified as the work of the devil (Boff 1992:65-6).

The terms 'mission' and 'missionaries' derive from this time. There arose some tensions between pope and kings over the appointment and control of colonial bishops, and in 1622 the Pope took control by forming the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. Through its members the Pope had an exclusive monopoly of evangelising newly discovered peoples. Colonial churches had no autonomy, but were subsidiary to Rome as "missions" (Bosch 1992:228-9). Alongside this oppressive propagation of the faith, there was the respected ascetic example of the monks. Poor and hard-working, they renewed agriculture, supported peasants, were resilient and persevering in the face of barbarian attacks. The monasteries became centres of culture and education. The disciplined tenacity of the monks was a practical expression of the Church's mission, and often became intentional mission in the practice of pilgrimage by monks (Bosch 1992:235).

The intimate relationship of Church and State that was stimulated by Augustine was later sealed by the theology of Thomas Aquinas. He expounded:

> a double order of knowledge and being, the one natural, the other supernatural: reason and faith, nature and grace, state and church, philosophy and theology, where the first of each pair refers to the natural foundation, the second to the supernatural "second level" (Bosch 1992:237).

2.2.4. The Protestant Reformation (16th century)

Martin Luther was the catalyst for the Reformation paradigm. Despite joining the Augustinian Friars, it was some years before he came across Augustine's writings. They

led him to a direct theological approach to the Scriptures and to reject the Aristotelian foundation of Thomas Aquinas' work. He replaced Aquinas' two-storey order with:

> an emphasis on tension, sometimes even opposition, between faith and reason . . church and world, theology and philosophy, the *Christianum* and the *humanum,* a tension which has characterised Protestantism, admittedly in a great variety of forms, ever since Luther (Bosch 1992:239-40).

The Reformation Churches stood for radical departures from Catholic practice and doctrine, particularly in returning to the primacy of salvation by faith, the direct relationship between believer and God, and the central place of the Scriptures, as against the primacy of the Church. A paradigm text for this period is, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith" (Romans 1:16. NRSV). However, the close relationship of church and state continued to be taken for granted, and different national Churches were a result of the Reformation. While the basic tenets of mission as sharing gospel and faith were renewed in Reformation theology, the preoccupation of the reformers was primarily with the task of reforming the Church of their time. The Reformers particularly pointed people to what God has already done through Christ rather than to what people should do for the salvation of the world, and condemned the use of coercion and force in Christianising other peoples (Bosch 1992:240-5).

Lutheran orthodoxy came to the view that all initiative in mission lay with God alone and that the Great Commission to go into all the world (Matthew 28:19) had been completed by the apostles. (Bosch 1992:250) The Calvinists were more visionary in this regard and considered aims of mission to involve extending the reign of Christ both through individual transformation and through the renewal of society. Voetius defined the aims of mission as threefold – conversion of the Gentiles, planting the church, and revealing the glory and sovereignty of God. The Puritans particularly stressed the latter point (Bosch 1992:258-9). Calvinist mission took place, whether by the Dutch or English, in the context of colonialist expansion. The Christendom idea was still intact and it was self-evident that European nations were Christian, and Protestants as much as Roman Catholics

assumed that the overseas possessions would become the same according to the national church establishment. Calvinists added to this the dimension of theocracy:

> Whenever Calvinist missions were launched, the purpose was to establish in the 'wilderness' a socio-political system in which God himself would be the real ruler. ... a perfect harmony between church and state was envisioned (Bosch 1992:259).

Extreme examples of this occurred among Indians in Massachusetts and Puritan colonies in North America. A harmony between church and state under Christ's rule was intended. Theocratic ideals were to be shattered by the Enlightenment, but their substance or at least residual beliefs in Christendom were to be evidenced in the ideals of many Missions of the 19th and 20th centuries which attempted to isolate the object people from corrupting influences and form them in a miniature Christian state. Such a tone was evident or longed for in many Aboriginal Missions in Australia, as already noted on page 15 (see Harris 1990).

Another side of the Reformation picture is the beginning of the breakdown on the Church/State nexus and the restricting power of institutionalised religion in favour of personal faith. This is particularly represented by the mission of the Anabaptists and pietists.

2.2.4.1. Anabaptists

The Anabaptists (groups who denied infant baptism) took up the Reformation principle of the priesthood of all believers to the extent of rejecting special office and the conventions of parochial boundaries of ministry. They went beyond the institutional reforming of the Church to reject both Catholic and Protestant forms and sent preachers throughout Europe with the aim of restoring the original community of true believers. They set themselves free from any ties with the State, and their ability to wander across boundaries contrasted with the Reformers who could not envisage mission beyond the borders of a Protestant government of their own persuasion (Bosch 1992:245-6).

2.2.4.2. Pietists

Another significant strand of mission developed with the Pietists in the 17th and 18th centuries. Pietism broke through the sterile, cerebral faith of the Churches:

> .... to a warm and devout union with Christ. Concepts such as repentance, conversion, the new birth and sanctification received new meaning. A disciplined life rather than sound doctrine, subjective experience of the individual rather than ecclesiastical authority, practice rather than theory – these were the hallmarks of the new movement (Bosch 1992:252-3).

The Pietists introduced "voluntarism" in mission in reaction against the institutional Churches. Mission was the work of Christ, who inspired individuals through the Spirit. The Pietists returned the Christian Faith to the dimension of a free movement away from the restrictions and conventions of institution. Early Pietism was also concerned with practical social needs, founding schools, orphanages, hospitals, etc. But later Pietism began to emphasise a dualism between sacred and profane, and became more escapist and separate from the world (Bosch 1992:252-4). The Pietist influence, then, was significant in the development of Protestant approaches to mission. It brought mission back to the ordinary believer, to be no longer the prerogative of colonial rulers and church hierarchies, and brought a new example of dedication to the task, particularly by the Moravians (Bosch 1992:255). Moravian missionaries were active in Australia and established Missions at Mapoon, Weipa and Aurukun on Cape York Peninsula for the Presbyterian Church (Harris 1990:485, 493).

2.2.5. The Enlightenment

The Western world-view was radically changed by the influences of the Enlightenment era. The empirical and rationalist thinking of Bacon, Galilei and Descartes in the early seventeenth century challenged the medieval hierarchy of God–Church–King–People–Nature. The Protestant Reformation had already weakened the unity and power of the western Church, and the real power of kings and nobles was destroyed in the Age of Revolution.

> In the Age of Science, *God* was largely eliminated from society's validation structure. People discovered, somewhat to their surprise at first, that they could ignore God and the church, yet be none the worse for it (Bosch 1992:263).

Bosch notes the following elements of the Enlightenment world-view.

- Human reason was 'natural' and the starting point for knowing
- Nature was objectified, discovered and exploited
- Purpose was eliminated from science and replaced by direct causality, leading science to become somewhat deterministic
- Progress and discovery were strong expectations and led to development and modernisation
- Scientific knowledge was regarded as factual, value-free and neutral, facts being separated from values which are based not on knowledge, but on opinions and beliefs
- All problems were solvable, at least in principle
- people were regarded as 'emancipated, autonomous individuals' (Bosch 1992: 264-7).

The Enlightenment thinking, then, was optimistic, positivistic and based on faith in the abilities of humankind. The effect of these changes on the Christian Churches, particularly the Protestant Churches, was profound. Catholicism withstood the effects more effectively until the Second Vatican Council in 1964 (Bosch 1992:262).

> Prior to the Enlightenment life in all its stratifications and ramifications was pervaded with religion. Legislation, the social order, private as well as public ethos, philosophical thinking, art – all these were, in one way or another, stamped religiously. . . . . It can, however, not be denied that the Enlightenment provided people with a new "plausibility structure", that the Christian Faith . . . no longer functioned in any direct way in informing scientific thinking. What distinguishes our culture from all cultures that have preceded it, then, is that it is, in its public philosophy, atheist (Bosch 1992:267-8).

Eventually, the Church-State relationship was undermined and the taken-for-granted theological and social assumptions of the Churches challenged and put under new scrutiny. However, God was not eliminated from the meaning and purpose of life, and the Churches became set free from the compromises and coercions of establishment status, and were able to return, in many ways, to the voluntary freedom and spiritual life of Christianity's beginnings, although hampered by its institutional heritage. The faith–institution–faith cycle had come full circle.

The new thinking pervaded much of new Christian theology. Reason and objective textual analysis became significant tools of study. Other reactions were to relate religion to human

feelings rather than reason, and to privatise religion. While some attempted to create a total Christian society, others saw secularisation in a positive light in returning Christians to a natural understanding of the world and the responsibilities of people for it, in accord with Biblical creation stories in which man and woman were given authority and responsibility for creation as stewards (not masters) (Genesis 2). Newbigin states,

> The roots of modern science lie in a society shaped by the biblical understanding of man's place in the natural world. . . . It is a desacralizing of the natural world which sets a man free to investigate, and experiment and to control (Newbigin 1966:32).

Many found it possible to accept the scientific world-view and to see religion as complementing the scientific world-view in the areas of purpose, meaning and values, and still relevant in the face of the inadequacies of ideologies of progress (Bosch 1992:269-270).

2.2.5.1. Separation of Church and State

The symbiosis of religious and civil power that began with Constantine and became entrenched in the Middle Ages between pope and emperor, was undermined by the Protestant Reformation, although the basic practice persisted in the development of nation-states and the establishment of particular churches as the state church. This merger of political, cultural and religious elements was still a feature in early colonisation, particularly from Spain and Portugal, but also from Protestant powers.

> The original inhabitants of North America, because they were "pagans", had no rights and were without further ado assumed to be subjects of the British throne. To subdue them and take their land was regarded as a divine duty similar to the Israelites' conquest of Canaan (Bosch 1992:275).

Enlightenment thinking placed pressure on the Church-State relationship which became increasingly unacceptable. In England however, the establishment of the Church of England finally remained despite some separation of religious and secular authority. On the continent, reaction was stronger and the separation more definite (Bosch 1992:275-6). Colonial expansion became much less of an integration between religious, commercial and political interests. Mercantile and imperialist interests became increasingly dominant, with religion tagging along and often facing antagonism from the colonialists. However,

Church authorities took a long time to come to terms with these changes and the English Church in particular, while attempting to retain, but in fact losing political influence, maintained the nexus of English culture and faith. The idea of Christendom lingered on and was manifest in most approaches to mission in Australia, with both the Church and the State attempting to use each other for their own ends.

> Thus the "secular" and the "religious" were clearly going their separate ways, even if it would take a long time before the full implications of the new situation would manifest itself . . . The *corpus Christianum*, particularly in the case of Britain, was not going to disappear in one fell swoop. The idea lingered on (Bosch 1992:276).

At the same time, the impulse for Christian mission was undermined by the breakdown of the Church-State co-operation and by the influence of Rationalist thought, particularly on the continent where: "By the end of the eighteenth century it had almost completely paralysed the will to mission" (Bosch 1992:276). In general, the impact of Rationalism and the counter-reaction of the Pietist Movement was less extreme in the Anglican Church, where a tradition of resisting extremes and tolerating different approaches was developing (Bosch 1992:277).

2.2.5.3. Religious Revival

The reactions and responses to Enlightenment influences, the spirit of optimism and the new opportunities for less oppressive voluntary faith, led to revivals which gave new life to churches and renewed activity in mission. There occurred first the Great Awakening in the American colonies between 1726 and 1780. Although beginning in the Dutch Reformed Church, a Presbyterian, Jonathan Edwards, became the prominent leader. He brought together the orthodox Biblical foundations of belief and the Pietist subjective experience of faith. Edwards also held to theocratic ideals based on the sovereignty of God. This revival preceded the full impact of the Enlightenment and ran out of steam as its influence increased (Bosch 1992:277, 279).

Meanwhile in England, the loss of social expectations to conform to religious faith made John and Charles Wesley realise that nominal membership did not guarantee faith, and so

western non-believers were as much objects of mission as people overseas. Hence they stressed the salvation of souls as the fundamental mission of Christians, and they believed that social changes would follow from conversion. Lack of support from institutional Anglicanism led their followers to begin the Methodist movement.

Then, back in North America, a Second Great Awakening occurred from 1787 to 1825, and had its influence and counterpart in Britain as the Evangelical Revival. By 1800, membership in North American churches had almost doubled (Bosch 1992:277-8). These twin movements across the Atlantic brought a new mood which "spawned a missionary spirit" (Bosch 1992:279). By 1817, the missionary cause had become an American enthusiasm. Similarly in Britain, William Carey expounded, "Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God" (in Bosch 1992:279). Paradoxically, the Enlightenment, which undermined traditional Church life, led to new opportunities for mission by the fruits of these revival movements.

> It was, after all, the new expansionist world-view which pushed Europe's horizons beyond the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean and thus paved the way for a world-wide Christian missionary outreach (Bosch 1992:274).

The enthusiasm engendered for the salvation of souls in the expanding world was manifested in the founding of voluntary mission societies which generally leapt ahead of the indifference of Church officialdom. In its institutional mode the Churches were more interested in maintaining their position and privilege in society than in the concerns of the poor and the colonies. Significantly, it was the brutish effects of colonialism that aroused much of the evangelicals' zeal, both for mission and for social reform.

> It was those touched by the Awakenings who were moved to compassion by the plight of people exposed to the degrading conditions in slums and prisons, in coal-mining districts, on the American frontier, in West Indian plantations, and elsewhere. . . . William Wilberforce, who launched a frontal attack on the practice of slavery in the British Empire, was an avowed evangelical (Bosch 1992:281).

But they were not just concerned with social reform. They saw the foundation of full life to be the spiritual awakening that came in response to the gospel. Another feature of the voluntary missionary movement in the nineteenth century was a lessening of the theocratic

ideal following the weakening of the Church/State relationship. Theocratic elements tended to be nationalistic and ethnocentric in a more secular way.

> The first generation of British evangelical missionaries, of all denominations, often fell foul of the colonial authorities. But as Victorian England sought to regain its religious dimension the second and subsequent generations of missionaries experienced less and less tension between working for God's kingdom and for the interests of the empire. Gradually, evangelicals became a respected power in the state, and, missionaries, whether they intended to or not, became promoters of Western imperial expansion (Bosch 1992:281-2).

The aftermath of these Revival movements was mixed. In England, evangelicals had considerable influence on British life, but enthusiasm tended to wane into "lifeless moral codes" (Bosch 1992:282). In the United States, interests in social concerns and orthodox evangelism diverged into a social gospel and fundamentalism respectively.

2.2.5.4. New motives in mission

Mission motives began to reflect the influence of the Enlightenment. Now that humans and their abilities were at the centre of attention rather than God, notions of theocracy and the sovereignty of God over all of life were less appropriate and there was a shift to a more personal human-based emphasis.

> Even in Christian circles human needs and aspirations, although originally couched in purely religious terms, began to take precedence over God's glory. So, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century the emphasis shifted to the love of Christ; still later the accent was on the salvation of the perishing heathen and in the early twentieth century on the social gospel (Bosch 1992:286).

The theme of love became a dominant one in mission movements. The positive side was expressed in compassion, empathy and solidarity. The negative side was expressed in romanticism, condescension, paternalism and superiority. Among those affected by revivals there was frequently a personal sense of gratitude to God for salvation in Christ, a sense of call or obligation to share this salvation with others on the basis that all people's were the objects of god's love and worthy of being saved (Bosch 1992:286-7).

A key verse from the missionary Paul is, "For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all . . ." (2 Corinthians 5:14 NRSV). Such a sense of being accepted and loved, and corresponding concern that others experience the same acceptance and love, inspired many to lives of sacrifice, commitment and dedication.

There continued to be little separation between concern to save souls and concern to improve the social and physical conditions of life, and the latter brought missionaries to oppose the dehumanising actions of colonialists, but not to question the superiority of western culture. The ideals of the love motive were diminished, however, by romantic notions of the "noble savage" – Rousseau's innocent child ready to welcome their benevolence, and the corollary that followed disillusionment – the notion of the depravity of native peoples. Such were Captain Cook's initial and later attitudes in the South Pacific.

It was a widespread view of the time that the peoples of the new worlds were eager to hear and accept what they brought. An archetypal figure was the man from Macedonia pleading with Paul in a vision, "Come over to Macedonia and help us" (Acts 16:9 NRSV). The seal of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (Anglican) bore this text in Latin: *Transiens adjuva nos.* Thus the love motive could readily descend to patronising condescension (Bosch 1992:288-90).

2.3. Gospel and Culture

A sense of religious superiority went hand in hand with a sense of cultural superiority. While not a new phenomenon, Western abilities gained through scientific and technological advances gave the colonists an unprecedented ability to conquer, both by force and by acculturation. There appeared to be little sense that the perceptions of the others needed to be taken into account or any thought given that God may be already present and active in their lives. The greatness of western nations was even attributed to the benefits of the Christian gospel, and so Christians again were the bearers of culture.

> The missionaries' concern therefore was the uplift of peoples deprived of the privileges they themselves were enjoying. Culturally impoverished peoples would, in this way, be elevated to a higher level (Bosch 1992:293).

Enlightenment influences, however, brought some hesitations to the automatic linking of gospel and culture in the late nineteenth century when the question began to be asked, "Must one educate and civilize before evangelism can be effective, or should one

concentrate on evangelism, confident that civilization will follow?" (Bosch 1992:296). Both views were expressed by both conservatives and liberals. The development emphasis of the twentieth century was also given a Christian interpretation. A popular text after the First World War was John 10:10, "I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly", and:

> "abundant life" was interpreted as the abundance of the good things that modern education, healing, and agriculture would provide for the deprived peoples of the world" (Newbigin 1978:103).

A basic problem for colonists and missionaries alike was their ethnocentrism. "They confused their middle-class ideals and values with the tenets of Christianity" (Bosch 1992:294). This meant that not only cultural values, but also theological perspectives were transmitted to new Christians. In the twentieth century, anthropological understandings began to influence this process and some adjustments to local customs became expected. Roman Catholics used the term "accommodation" and Protestants the term "indigenization" in mission policy, although in practice, "it was usually taken for granted that it was the missionaries, not the members of the young churches, who would determine the limits of indigenization" (Bosch 1992:295). There are qualifications to make to this picture of the gospel-culture amalgam. Firstly, it is unavoidable that the gospel is conveyed in cultural robes and inevitable for the times that western missionaries would introduce civilisation along with Christ. There were also some who realised the adverse impact of colonisation and sought to minimise the effects (Bosch 1992:297-8).

This chapter has shown the roots and distortions of approaches to mission in the colonial period. There were differences between the English institutional Church attempting to retain its status and influence in the nexus of Church and State, and many individuals and free church groups who were influenced by the Evangelical Revival with its charismatic emphasis on personal and communal faith. The beginnings of Christian mission in Australia, tagging along behind the colonial settlement, will now be examined.

3. Settlement and Mission in Australia

A study of the position of the Church of England, and attitudes of Church and Government officials at the beginnings of the Australian settlement, provides important perspectives on the pattern of mission to Aborigines that followed, largely unsuccessfully, and led to the more enduring efforts in the Missions and settlements of remote areas. The early period up to 1850 is examined in particular, for by this time, the pattern of 'colonial social relations' can be seen, the separation of Church and State was inevitable, the massive and destructive effects of dispossession of Aborigines was clear to humanitarians, and ineffectual patterns of amelioration and mission had begun. This chapter, then, examines the difficulties the Churches faced in this period, typical attitudes towards Aborigines, and the initial attempts of care and mission towards Aborigines.

The position of the Christian Churches at the beginning of the Australian colony was difficult as the motives for settlement were primarily economic and colonial. Christian mission was hampered initially by secular obstacles, the weak state of the institutional Church of England and by the weakening of the Church/State relationship. The first Chaplains, Johnson and Marsden, were Evangelicals, and they became preoccupied with the difficulties of ministering to convicts who were under the control of obstructive officials and with trying to counter the erosion of Establishment privilege. Aborigines were neglected initially by the Church under false assumptions about land use and their 'low' humanity, and because of their seeming intransigence. Aboriginal life was destroyed or radically disrupted through racial attitudes that viewed them as primitive savages at the bottom of the ladder of social evolution, and by the clash over land caused by the incompatibility between the capitalist mode of production brought by the colonialists and the hunter-gather mode. Only as their resistance diminished and the settlement stabilised, was real attention given to their plight. Humanitarian and Christian concern arose and led to attempts to provide safe havens for the remaining Aborigines, either for their expected demise, or for their resocialisation through training institutions

and Missions. 'Civilising' and evangelising went hand in hand, but failed in proximity to European settlement and its destructive effects.

3.1. Churches and Australian beginnings

Christian mission to Australian Aborigines has always been 'hard ground' for the Churches. A basic reason for this is that the Churches did not come as Pilgrim Fathers, but on the tail of the grim penal settlement; Australia did not start as a missionary vision of God's kingdom, but as a dumping ground for England's unwanted poor. British troops did not come as supporters of the Christian gospel but as prison warders and exploiters, and clergy did not come with the aim of converting Aborigines but in order to minister to their own members among the settlers, troops and convicts: "The forces which before the eighteenth century ended brought the white man to Australia were not religious but economic and imperial" (Bollen 1973:3).

The first settlement began with good intentions, at least with a stereotyped formula that derived from the days of the American colonies. Governor Phillip was instructed "to endeavour by every possible means to open an intercourse with the natives, and to conciliate their affections, enjoining all our subjects to live in amity and kindness with them" (in Clarke 1977:106). Such sentiments ignored the Aboriginal right of occupation, and were quickly lost sight of in the preoccupations of supervising the first fleet's near-800 convicts and their 300 jailers. The interests of the colonisers were to be of first importance in the face of resistance (Harris 1990:36). Phillip was also instructed:

> And it is further our royal will and pleasure that you do by all proper methods to enforce a due observance of religion and good order among the inhabitants of the new settlement, and that you do take steps for the due observance of publick worship as circumstances will permit (in Woolmington 1976:1).

This clearly refers to enforcing the observance of conventional established religion for settlers and convicts, who were assumed to be Christian by virtue of baptism, and by the equation of British civilisation and Christianity, and gives no thought to the conversion of Aborigines. Such was the state of British religion that the first Chaplains faced great

difficulties in establishing the due observance expected. As far as Aborigines were concerned, the settlers were preoccupied in responding to their inexplicable way of life, their obstinacy and resistance. A people facing aggressive mistreatment and slaughter as well as social disintegration through prostitution, alcohol abuse, hunger and disease were hardly a field ripe for missionary endeavour, yet as the settlement developed and resistance brought under control, missionary effort became one of the responses.

While the established Church of England, institutionalised, beneficed and inward-looking, appeared indifferent to the new settlement with its the penal and economic motivations, the contemporary evangelical revival in England gave impetus to basic religious involvement in the first fleet. The great evangelical societies[1] had not been founded by 1788, but William Wilberforce and members of the Eclectic Society convinced William Pitt to appoint an evangelical, Richard Johnson, as Chaplain. The older Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) and the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) were more Anglo-Catholic and establishment-oriented, and the latter simply gave the Chaplain gifts of Bibles and other literature. The evangelical impetus was significant but the focus was primarily on the British in the colony, the assumption being that the area was virtually uninhabited (Harris 1990:40-1). While the voluntary evangelical societies that emerged by 1800 carried their religious enthusiasm abroad, their energies:

> were being absorbed by dozens of new stations in India, Africa and the Carribean. ... What happened was that Australia and the other colonies fell between the two fronts of evangelical labour: ministering to the unregenerate masses of Christian England on the one side, and enlightening those who sat in heathen darkness on the other (Bollen 1973:7).

Australian settlers and convicts had low priority, and Aborigines none, as the settlement was not perceived to be a heathen environment, but a Christian colony. The evangelical Chaplains were not comfortable with the high church SPG and SPCK, and kept in closer

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1 The Baptist Missionary Society (1792), the London Missionary Society (1795), the Church Missionary Society (1799) and the Wesleyan Missionary Society (1818).

contact with the Church Missionary Society (Anglican), but CMS refused to send missionaries due to the perception that "the mass of the population in the Colony are professedly Christians" (in Bollen 1973:8). Despite the early influence of the evangelicals in the Sydney settlement, wider support for Church development came as a consequence of revival in the predominantly Anglo-Catholic Church of England in the 1830's and 1840's. Influences such as the Oxford or Tractarian movement revived the SPG and SPCK, which now turned their resources to the newer colonies in Canada, Africa and Australia (Bollen 1973:14). The policy of SPG then, however, was to support mission work with Aborigines only in an indirect way:

> .. the few missionaries actively interested in evangelizing the Aboriginals were genuinely convinced that the corruption of the native tribes was directly attributable to the pernicious influences of settlers and their convict servants. Since contact between settlers and Aboriginals could not be avoided, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (S.P.G.) obviously felt that native conversion could best be served by first reconverting the European settlers and convicts, thereby eradicating the root cause of the moral corruption, rather than dealing with the secondary symptoms of iniquity as exhibited by the behaviour of Aboriginals (Clarke 1977:108).

Johnson and the second Chaplain, Samuel Marsden, were both evangelicals, and received minimal conventional support for religious activities from "the touchy and often tyrannical governors and their officials" (Breward 1991:3). Marsden's attempts to introduce evangelical innovations were soundly squashed by Governor Macquarie, "High-church Tory as he was" (Gregory 1973:7). The Chaplains were compromised by their status in the civil establishment, and were disheartened by the disdain for religion in the convict settlement. Marsden described it thus [although Yarwood (1977:54-5) feels that he was exaggerating in order to support Governor Hunter's position against Macarthur]: "Gaming and drunkenness, robberies and murder are common crimes. The colony was deluged with every species of sin and iniquity" (Historical Records of Aust. Vol 11:55, in Garvin 1977:23). Such comments, however, reveal as much about the formality and privilege of the British clergy and the inadequacy of their involvement with the lower classes. Breward notes:

> Reports of lax religious observance in the bush and the depravity of convicts could give an impression of much more godless communities than existed in Britain. In fact there was plenty of British godlessness. There it was socially and legally

> masked by the social prestige and power of the churches, especially those which were established. Their failure to minister adequately to the whole community can be seen not only in the convicts' behaviour, but also in the irreligion of the soldiers guarding them and in many of the free settlers (Breward 1991:1).

There was also much antagonism to organised religion in Britain because of the association of the established Church with the British aristocracy, the worldliness and lack of pastoral concern of many beneficed clergy, and the exploitative tithe system imposed on the agricultural community. While there were many humanitarian movements and institutions, the hierarchical structure of society was religiously entrenched and the poor kept firmly in their place (Grocott 1980:14ff). The antipathy to religion among the working classes was transported with them to Australia, and the institutionalism of British religion was immediately exposed by the rawness of the new settlement.

With the inadequacy of official religion and much antipathy to it by officials and convicts, the initial impetus of Christian religion in Australia came more from lay immigrants who brought personal faith with them. This applied especially to non-Anglicans,[2] who were denied clergy initially. Petitions in 1787 and 1792 for Roman Catholic priests to be appointed were denied, and in 1817 Governor Macquarie deported a Father O'Flynn who had arrived regardless. Continued agitation resulted in Father Therry arriving in 1820 and being provided with a government allowance. In 1825, the Presbyterians also gained assistance for their first minister, Rev John Dunmore Lang, while the Wesleyans gained such assistance in 1839 (Gregory 1973:6-9, 19). "Australian Christianity in its first phase was lay rather than clerical, personal rather than institutional." (Bollen 1973:11) The Churches followed on with the difficult task of setting up the material and institutional framework. As Bollen says:

> "They were to prove themselves very vigorous as the century wore on but their vigour was to be largely spent in equipping themselves and supplying the

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2 Note: 'Anglican' is used synonymously with 'Church of England'. 'Anglican Church of Australia' became the official name in the 1980s.

> ordinances of religion to a spreading and increasing population. They were forever catching up; catching up, growth, and in time the rewards of size, became all-absorbing" (1973:14-15).

There were initial attempts to endow the Church of England as the established Church through the Churches and Schools Corporation of 1826. At the time of settlement however, the established Church of England in England was facing increasing criticism of its privileges, and this added to the impact of the irreligious character of the settlement in its beginnings in Australia. Establishment proved to be as much a hindrance as a help in the colony. With the Church dependent on Government grants for stipends, various unsympathetic officials wielded the 'power of the purse' by limiting clergy numbers and movements, placing demands on their services, and reducing their influence. A long running struggle occurred between Governor Bourke and Bishop Broughton (Shaw 1978:54ff).

Governor Bourke incorporated liberal attitudes in the Church Act of 1836 by extending partial endowments to other Churches for building churches and for stipends. Significantly, endowments were supplementary to voluntary contributions, and Churches had to be more self-supporting (Shaw 1978:12-15). These supplements, however, bridged many funding gaps, and enabled the extension and consolidation of traditional church life at a time when "the stain of convictism had been largely erased by massive immigration, the imbalance of the sexes had diminished, and colonial life, at least in the cities, was acquiring some of the refinements of European civilization" (Bollen 1973:20).

The dissolution in 1833 of the Church and Schools Corporation, which had given Anglicans monopoly of education, and the passing of the Church Act of 1836, virtually disestablished the Church of England and brought it uncomfortably into equitable standing with other Churches. The separation of Church and State happened over the next decades as State aid dwindled, and in 1870, was abolished in Victoria. Secular education was introduced in 1872 (Bollen 1973:18, 26, 118) and a secular understanding

of government began to prevail. Bishop Broughton found the Church to have neither the privileges of Establishment nor the freedom of independence. He depended heavily on the support of SPG and SPCK to supplement local appeals to meet debts and stipends (Shaw 1978:218-9). In 1853, he campaigned among the English bishops for localised synodical government and for the concept of a world-wide Anglican Communion (Shaw 1978:271). In this way, the Church of England in Australia became self-supporting and increasingly self-governing. The limited effort of the Church's mission towards Aborigines by this time, contrasts with the growth of mission in the South Pacific. The latter development will be examined in the contexts of Marsden's work (3.3.) and the establishment of the Australian Board of Missions (3.4.).

This account has indicated the changes occurring at this time in the balance of influences in the Church/State relationship. The Anglican Church's influence had declined, although it was still expected to undergird colonial society with conventional religion, but in a way subservient to colonial officials. The Church was caught between trying to maintain its influence as bearer and preserver of British culture through official support, and becoming free of imperial forces itself to carry out its own socio-religious ideals.

3.2. Attitudes, policies and failures

The British carried with them two conflicting preconceived notions about native peoples; they were either primitive savages or noble savages. These notions go back to previous contacts and were clear in reports by Dampier and Cook. "In 1688 William Dampier had described the Aborigines as 'the miserablest People in the world [who] differ but little from Brutes', while Captain James Cook in 1770 described them as noble and courageous" (Broome 1982:25).

The British experience of Africans in the 16th century encouraged their perception that black people were violent, unpredictable savages, not unlike the apes. The later involvement of the British with the slave trade added to their rationalisation of Africans

as less than human, and so exploitable, and a view of themselves as the only ones civilised and fit to rule them. The notion of the noble savage came from French philosophers in the 18th century who imagined that people living close to nature and free of urban constraints "were healthier in body and mind, and in perfect harmony with their fellows and nature" (Broome 1982:25-6). In Australia, this latter view declined rapidly in the face of the harsh realities of frontier conflict. A popular view that did persist at the time was one popularised by the English philosopher John Locke in the 17th century, the Greek concept of the Great Chain of Being (Harris 1990:24).

> The Great Chain of Being was one of the most influential concepts at the time of the first settlement and early development of Australia. It was a way of arranging all living matter on a great chain from the simplest organisms at the bottom to man at the top. By the late 18th century it was increasingly common to place the various 'races' in hierarchical order with northern Europeans taking up the number one position (Reynolds 1989:107).

Phrenology then became popular, that is, the physical study of the skull with the belief that the shape of the skull and hence the brain within, determined skills and character traits. It was argued on this basis that Aborigines were inferior intellectually (Reynolds 1989:107f). In Britain, Christian philanthropy brought slavery to an end in the British Empire in 1833. Humanitarian concerns about Aborigines arose in Britain and Australia in the 1830s, and some clergy and lay philanthropists argued against the "splendid specious fallacy" (Threlkeld 1838:5 in Reynolds 1989:110) of phrenology, and argued for the equality of Aborigines as human beings. Threlkeld cleverly responded:

> Perhaps the Aborigines think that there is an innate deficiency in the bulk of White men's skulls which prevents their attainment of the native language (in Harris 1990:33).

Popular opinion, however, remained stronger. The official instructions to Captain Phillip in 1787 to protect and befriend the Aborigines, was soon shattered by the realities of contact. "The official good intentions of the authorities towards Aborigines were vitiated by mutual incomprehension, rivalry for land and water and brutal exploitation of women." (Breward 1991:5-6). The hard ground on which relationships rapidly foundered was the basic culture clash of conflicting attitudes to the land and to natural resources, and opposing social structures:

> Racial relations had thus passed through three phases by the last months of 1788 – the 'cautious friendship' of the first few days; the 'neither frequent nor cordial' intermezzo of the late summer and autumn; and the often open animosity of the winter and spring (Stanner 1963:180).

It was clear by 1791, that hunting and pastoral interests could not co-exist. The pastoral boundary marked the division between the survival of Aboriginal society outside it and the pattern of dominance, subjugation and inequality within, and general indifference to the fate of Aborigines. Stanner suggests that "the destruction of Aboriginal society was not the consequence of European development, but its price" (Stanner 1963:189). He also notes the co-existence of three realities as the Australian story unfolded:

> Racial conflict persisted wherever any Aborigines survived; many Aborigines made continuous efforts to adapt themselves to new conditions of life; and among a few Europeans, an interest in the subjugated race never wholly died. . . . without them there could have been no ground of spring for the renascent humanitarianism of the 1930's (Stanner 1963:188).

It was not that Aborigines were not accommodating to new ways, but as a people on the defensive they were not readily manipulated or enculturated on European terms, nor allowed an existence on their own terms:

> .. suppose that he treats them with kindness and consideration (and there are happily many such settlers in Australia), what recompense can he make them for occupying their waters, and by depriving them of their supply of food? He neither does nor can replace their loss. ... The eye of compassion, or of philanthropy, will easily discover the anomalous and unfavourable position of the Aborigines of our colonies, when brought into contact with the European settlers. They are strangers in their own land, and possess no longer the usual means of procuring their daily subsistence; hungry and famished, they wander about begging among the scattered stations, where they are treated with a familiarity by the men living at them, which makes them become familiar in turn, until, at last, getting impatient and troublesome, they are roughly repulsed, and feelings of resentment and revenge are kindled (Eyre 1845 in Reynolds 1989:29).

This primary conflict over land and resources combined with the dominating ethnocentrism of the Europeans that viewed their own culture as civilised and Aboriginal culture as degraded, is a fundamental source of the oppression of Aboriginal cultural life to the present, and the failure or inadequacy of most missionary endeavours in stimulating an indigenous enculturation of the Christian Faith by Aborigines.

British understandings of land ownership encouraged appropriation of the Australian continent:

> From at least the mid-eighteenth century, English law regularly assumed that hunters and gatherers had no concept of property. That assumption was related to the fiction that the lands that hunters and gatherers occupied were desert, or waste, because they were "uncultivated" (Williams 1986:110).

Of influence also at this time was an evolutionary theory of human society developed by philosophers in France and Scotland which argued that human societies "progressed from a state of nature through stages based on hunting and gathering, pastoralism, agriculture, and commerce" (Williams 1986:110). These views were readily applied to Aborigines who lacked pastoral or agricultural practices, thus placing them at the lowest level. It was quickly evident, however, that the land was occupied extensively, but then the justification was made that the Aborigines "ranged over it rather than resided on it" (Reynolds 1987:13) and so did not possess it in a legal sense. Religious justification of dispossession was also made, in particular based on the Creator's command: "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it" (Genesis 1:28 NIV). Rev J D Lang commented: "Now that the Aborigines had not done, and therefore it was no fault in taking the land of which they were previously the possessors" (Lang 1856 in Reynolds 1989:5).

In the early nineteenth century, Comte proposed a positivistic method of study involving observation, experiment and comparison, in particular the comparison of 'civilised' and 'primitive' societies to observe the stages of evolution. The evidence of this evolution from low to high forms of civilisation were seen to be in the forms of culture that were compared (Chase 1970:4-6). The influence of Social Darwinism added further justification by the late 19th century:

> It seems a law of nature where two races whose stages of progression differ greatly are brought into contact, the inferior race is doomed to wither and disappear. . . . Human progress has all been achieved by the spread of the progressive races and the squeezing out of the inferior ones. . . . . It may be doubted whether the Australian aborigine would ever have advanced much beyond the status of the neolithic races in which we found him, and we need not therefore lament his disappearance. All that can be expected of us is that we shall make his last days as free from misery as we can (The Age, 11 January 1888 in Reynolds 1989:9).

Social Darwinism dominated views of Aborigines during the first half of the 19th century and well into the 20th century:

> Social darwinists regarded them as an earlier, less evolved people, a relic of the childhood of the race preserved by Australia's isolation. They were, as a result doomed to die out. They could not compete in the struggle for existence with the higher white race. Humanitarian concern might ease the passing but nothing could bend the iron laws of evolution (Reynolds 1989:114).

While missionary attitudes were influenced by such low views of Aboriginal society, the line was drawn at the view that Aborigines had no soul:

> The belief that Aborigines indeed possessed immortal souls, 'the vital spark of heavenly flame', was to become the final, non-negotiable tenet of missionary belief about the Aborigines. They possessed a soul. They were human and therefore capable of salvation.
>
> Beyond this, however, most missionaries' views were not clearly distinguishable from those of the rest of the community. To the Wesleyan, Samuel Leigh, Aborigines were 'barbarians' to whom had been assigned 'the lowest place in the scale of intellect'. To the Lutheran missionary William Schmidt, they were the 'lowest in the scale of the human race' (Harris 1990:29).

In the 1830s, British humanitarians, Churchmen and some officials became very critical of the colony and its effects on Aborigines, calling for recognition of prior ownership, and compensation in provision of reserves, education and welfare (Reynolds 1987:96). "Humanitarians in both Britain and Australia equated the existing system of colonization with slavery." (Reynolds 1987:87). This developed into a deep conflict between British legislators, who sought to apply remedies and the recognition of Aboriginal rights, and the colonisers, who pragmatically dealt with the actual situation from a position of self-interest. This was a time of rapid extension of the frontier, and so of frontier violence. "The Aborigines, in the middle, remained the losers" (Prentis 1975:61).

In the 1840s, new policies issued by the Imperial Government did influence the colonial governments to appoint protectors, to encourage missionary and educational initiatives, and make some attempts at applying even handed justice (Reynolds 1989:186). Attempts were made to settle Aborigines down as farmers or in village communities, to change them from hunters and gatherers to tillers of the soil and to educate them in European

'civilised' habits. This was largely ineffectual in the face of the destructive influences of the settlement. Referring to early governors, Clarke wrote:

> Consequently, their method of civilizing the natives took the form of repeated attempts to encourage permanent settlement by breaking up the pattern of tribal society and assisting Aboriginals to establish themselves as peasant farmers on small agricultural allotments. Education of native children was another area of life in which a policy of Europeanization was followed, and here also repeated attempts were made to wean Aboriginal children from the wild life of nomadic hunting or from a life of parasitical begging on the fringes of settlement, and to inculcate in them the necessary skills and desire to work the soil. Such schemes, whether governmental or missionary in initiation were complete failures (Clarke 1977:107).

Similar patterns of contact, dispossession, slaughter, settling down and protection occurred in Queensland. There were 20,000 Europeans in Queensland at the time of separate government in 1859, and the pastoral industry dominated:

> Policy was dominated by the desire to 'disperse' the Aborigines from in front of the advancing tide of settlement. . . . In 1897 the colonial parliament swung to the opposite extreme, introducing a protective legislation which remained virtually intact until 1965. Similar legislation was adopted in Western Australia and the Northern Territory (Reynolds 1989:195).

Protection, however, gave officials authoritarian control over the lives of Aborigines – where they could live, whom they could marry, and control of their money. The recalcitrant or criminal were readily transported to closed reserves such as Palm Island used for this purpose during the first half of the 20th century. Part-Aboriginal children were considered a 'social blot' and were also moved to protective reserves such as Yarrabah, Mapoon and Cape Bedford. Protection included a policy of segregating and isolating Aborigines from European contact for their own good (Reynolds 1989:199-206).

It can be seen that Church officials and missionaries shared racial attitudes of their time, were caught up in the momentum of colonial dispossession and settlement, and became preoccupied in surviving with limited resources. Eventually humanitarian sensitivities led to more concentrated efforts to missionise and resocialise Aborigines to be more acceptable and useful for colonial society. It can be said, on the one hand, that the colonial government sought to use the Churches as a means of settling Aborigines down

and ending the disruption they caused to colonial expansion, and on the other hand, that the Churches sought government support for their efforts to end abuse and further their aims to transform Aboriginal lives both socially and spiritually. The focus now turns to a closer view of the early involvement of Churches with Aborigines.

3.3. Churches and Aborigines

In 1825, Governor Darling was instructed:

> .. to the utmost of your power, promote Religion and Education among the Native Inhabitants of Our said Colony, or of the Land and Islands thereto adjoining; and ... that you take such measures as may appear to you, with the advice of Our said Archdeacon, to be necessary for their conversion to the Christian Faith and for their advancement in Civilization (in Reynolds 1989:183).

However, in view of the unfavourable conditions the Christian Churches faced in becoming established in the British settlements in Australia and the general low view of Aboriginal society, it is not surprising that there was little will or means to give attention to mission to the Aboriginal inhabitants. Nor were the aggressive dispossession and the patronising expectations that Aborigines would delight in being 'civilised' according to European ideals of settled life, toil, modesty, cleanliness and morality, conducive to a receptive attitude.

Richard Johnson had some concern for Aborigines, and he and sympathetic settlers tried to care for Aborigines during a devastating epidemic in 1789. The Johnsons attempted to care for a 15-year old Aboriginal girl for a year, but she then returned to her own people (Harris 1990:41). Johnson also wrote to London in 1791 about sending out missionaries, but at the same time he was in some despair at the huge disparity between the ideals of British Christianity and the contrary irreligiosity of the settlement. In an address to the colonial inhabitants, he appealed in vain against their profanity, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, etc. that he considered set a bad example of British/Christian civilisation:

> .. how must their minds become prejudiced, and their hearts hardened, against that pure and holy religion which we profess (in Harris 1990:43).

Still, in 1819, concerned citizens were writing to newspapers expressing the view that the Church was neglecting its duties to Aborigines and should send out missionaries (Harris 1990:46).

The second Chaplain, Samuel Marsden, joined Johnson in 1794 and quickly became fully occupied as a farmer, magistrate and minister. Marsden's pessimism about mission to Aborigines reflected contemporary low views of Aboriginal society, the assumptions of European cultural superiority, and the confusion or enculturation of the Christian Faith with British culture:

> The Victorians, in particular the Evangelical missionaries, conceived of the Christianity they took to distant lands as involving far more than a set of personal beliefs about a divine figure. Christianity, for them, was more a way of life, which was based upon certain moral and ethical values, and which, while allowing for small variations, corresponded closely to the ideal of Victorian England (Usher 1974:15).

There was some debate in theory in missionary circles as to whether civilising or evangelising came first, but in practice they were seen to go hand in hand, usually with the civilising regarded as an indispensable priority. Marsden saw it this way and considered that the Aborigines were not yet ready for Christianity (Harris 1990:73):

> The arts [of civilization] and religion should go together. The attention of the Heathen can be gained and their vagrant habits corrected only by the arts. Till their attention is gained, and moral and industrial habits are induced, little or no progress can be made in teaching them the gospel (Marsden in Usher 1974:17).

The Marsdens made personal effort to put this into practice by raising two Aboriginal boys in their own family, but they were raised as servants rather than equals. The first returned to his own people, and the second died a social misfit (Harris 1990:42).

In 1810, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) advised Marsden to "contribute to the civilisation of the heathen and thus prepare them for the reception of moral and religious instruction" (in Harris 1990:73). Marsden's speedy disillusionment is shown in the following quotations from 1814 and 1819:

> the Aborigines 'had no wants, they lived free and independent, and thought little more of to-morrow than the fowls of the air or the beasts of the field, and put no value upon the comforts of civil life'; further it had been found impossible 'to attach them, either to places or to individuals in the Colony who wished to benefit them' (Yarwood 1977:160).
>
> The Aborigines are the most degraded of the human race. . . the time is not yet arrived for them to receive the great blessings of civilisation and the knowledge of Christianity (in Harris 1990:22).

Marsden had early contact with the London Missionary Society (Congregational), and became their agent through his support of LMS workers who had escaped from Tahiti in 1798 and took refuge in Sydney. He also supported Samuel Leigh (Methodist) who arrived in 1815 and took interest in Aborigines, although not officially appointed a missionary. Through his efforts, the Wesleyan Missionary Society appointed Revd William Walker as the first appointed missionary to Aborigines in 1821 (Breward 1991:3; Harris 1990:47).

Marsden remained negative about missionary work with Aborigines and came to give his energies to mission to New Zealand Maoris (Usher 1974:17). He made several visits to New Zealand and in 1808, he urged the CMS to begin mission work there. He had been seeking funds from both LMS and CMS for a missionary vessel for this purpose and finally put up the money himself in about 1814 (Yarwood 1977:163-4). Reflecting the evolutionary ideas of the time, Marsden regarded Aborigines as 'savages', but viewed the Maoris as 'civilised heathens'. Peoples of the Pacific islands were considered more advanced because of their more settled lifestyle, village economies and centralised leadership, and more capable of responding to the Christian message and adopting European ways. Marsden wrote in 1822: "Missionaries going amongst savage nations are very differently situated from those who go to preach the gospel to civilised heathens. It is necessary to introduce the simple arts amongst the savages in order to arrest their vagrant habits" (in Harris 1990:74-5).

In 1825, Marsden established in Sydney an auxiliary of the Church Missionary Society. Then in 1832, the auxiliary accepted a layman George Langhorne to train for missionary work, and in 1836, he began a short-lived appointment at Sydney's Goat Island where some Aborigines had been confined. A more substantial work was attempted by two CMS ordained missionaries, Watson and Handt, who arrived in 1832 to establish a mission station at Wellington (Harris 1990:56). Their work was greatly hampered by the incongruous life-style of so many outside the mission. Nevertheless, they persevered with care for the sick, education of children, establishing agriculture and learning the Wiradjuri language (Harris 1990:57-9). Perseverance brought respect, but drought, outside influences, severe staff conflicts and Watson's over-zealousness in removing children from their parents to the Mission to protect them from disease and death led to its eventual demise in 1834.

The Church Missionary Society appointed a couple to work with Aborigines in 1822 rather by accident. George and Martha Clarke were on their way to New Zealand, but were delayed in Sydney. Clarke managed the educational Native Institution set up in Parramatta by Macquarie, and also had an itinerant ministry to Aborigines and convicts in the western hinterland of Sydney. While they were willing to continue, Marsden posted them to New Zealand in 1824, no doubt considering it to be a more productive field. "After Walker and Clarke, no further missionaries were appointed to work in the Sydney region. It was generally believed that success could be achieved only at a distance from the bad influence of colonial society" (Harris 1990:50).

Another missionary effort of note is that of Lancelot Threlkeld under the auspices of the London Missionary Society from about 1825 at Lake Macquarie. The Mission he first established was short-lived, due to conflict over high costs and Threlkeld's conflict with Marsden as the LMS agent. However, Threlkeld was able to continue with private support through the mediation of Archdeacon Broughton. Threlkeld's approach was

opposed to the views of Marsden in that he put learning the language first, evangelisation second, with cultural change to follow:

> With respect to seeing my system, it can be seen and known in two minutes, namely, first obtain the language, then preach the gospel, then urge them from gospel motives to be industrious at the same time being a servant to them to win them to that which is right (in Harris 1990:54).

Sadly his work was forced to an end because most of the Aborigines were lost to massacres, disease or the lure of fringe attractions in Newcastle.

The other examples of missionary effort with Aborigines up to the 1850's that Harris (1990) records, further illustrate the pattern of failure of mission close to settlement, due to limitations imposed by typical low estimates of Aboriginal society, European ethnocentrism, and the destructive effects of settlement and dispossession. The few who came to establish close relationships with Aborigines, appreciated their lifestyle, and sought to redress the injustice they received, were frustrated and ultimately powerless in the face of these factors, or withdrew in despair because of official attitudes and the unrelenting abuse and inhumanity of the settlers. It was not until protection increased, and Missions were established in remote areas of the north and centre, beyond the main areas of settlement and often in areas unsuitable for pastoral and agricultural industries, that they began to endure.

3.4. The Australian Board of Missions

The Australian Board of Missions was established in 1850 as the official mission body of the Anglican Church in Australia, not primarily for mission in Australia, but to the peoples of the Pacific Islands. The move to establish the Board came from the Bishop of New Zealand, George Selwyn, who wrote to Bishop Tyrrell of Newcastle with a proposal "to establish a Provincial Board of Missions for the six Australasian Dioceses, having especially for its object the evangelization of New Caledonia, the New Hebrides, the Loyalty Islands, the Solomon Islands, New Britain, New Hanover, etc., etc., in fact all the dark islands contiguous to Australia" (in Jones 1920:88). The Melanesian emphasis

reflects both the higher evolutionary status accorded to their societies, and also the mixture of despair for, and indifference to, mission to the lowly-regarded Aborigines. With the advocacy of Bishop Broughton of Sydney and the Bishops of Adelaide and Melbourne, the Board also "accepted as part of its primary responsibility the work of christianizing the aborigines of Australia" (Thomas 1946:18), but the Board had no means to do anything significant until late in the 19th century. Even then, the Board was virtually dragged into support for work in two directions – the New Guinea Mission and the Aborigines. This is discussed in 4.3.2.

3.5. Patterns for future mission

This early period of European settlement in New South Wales reveals several factors that prejudiced Christian mission towards Aborigines then, and were to be repeated as the settlement and dispossession spread north into the regions of Queensland, and also influenced the pattern, style and attitudes of the Mission-station approach that was to predominate in the following century. Firstly, the dispossession and consequent destruction of Aboriginal ties to land, language, ceremony and their lifestyle, broke their dignity, self-confidence and will. This largely reduced them to a minority group who faced prejudice, control and processes of resocialisation by the dominant British. Aboriginal responses of both hostility and apathy made the task of mission by the dominant group a near impossible task.

Secondly, Christian mission was hampered by the low spiritual state of the Church of England, the difficulties of the transition from establishment and its privileges to the necessities of developing greater self-support in the new colonial environment, and the preoccupations of establishing church life among the settlers. There was neither the will nor the resources for the full-scale effort that mission required in the face of the contradictions of dispossession.

Thirdly, Church officials, people and missionaries shared many common negative attitudes and stereotypes of Aborigines of the time, and the inability of most to relate to Aborigines without a sense of cultural and social superiority, meant that mission was characterised by efforts to resocialise Aborigines both culturally and spiritually. Combined with the destructive effects of close settlement, the favoured pattern for mission became the Mission-station approach which aimed to isolate, protect, and transform the lives according to European determinants. The Church thus reacted *against* the destructive impact of settlement by seeking to protect Aborigines, and also acted *with* the colonists in its efforts to resocialise them away from the interests of the settlers.

4. Contact, Policy and Mission in Queensland

Following the overview of Government and Church attitudes, and early missionary activity in Australia to 1850, the discussion now turns to Queensland for a brief review of the different strands of contact and settlement, mainly in Cape York Peninsula, and then to a broad examination of Aboriginal policies and practice of both Government and Church. As noted, the pattern of attitudes and practices of mission towards Aborigines that was set in the early years influenced mission development towards Aborigines in the following century.

4.1. European Contact on Cape York Peninsula

The main aim of this section is to examine the diverse contact of Aborigines and other peoples on Cape York Peninsula by land and sea which preceded the closer impact on and control of Aborigines by Government and Church agents. This is significant background for the Lockhart River Mission on the east coast of Cape York Peninsula, as the Aborigines of the coastal region were under pressure both from the exploitation of sea resources by lugger men and from the land incursion of explorers, miners and pastoralists, for some time prior to the establishment of the Lockhart River Mission (Chase 1980:104).

Pre-settlement contact with Terra Australis occurred along the northern coastline, possibly by the Portuguese early in the sixteenth century, and definitely by the Dutch at the beginning of the seventeenth century when Willem Jansz. landed on the western shores of Cape York Peninsula in 1606, followed by Cartensz. in 1623 (Fitzgerald 1982:36-7; 42-4). British exploration began along the east coast with Lt. James Cook and the *Endeavour* from south to north in 1770 (Fitzgerald 1982:46-53). Land settlement, in Queensland, however, did not begin until early in the nineteenth century when the Sydney settlement began to expand northwards. The major impetus for expansion was the desire for pastoral land, and this ensured that it was accompanied by the typical patterns of frontier violence.

John Oxley explored Moreton Bay in 1822, and in 1842 the Brisbane district was opened to free settlers (Fitzgerald 1982:61; Laurie 1959:157). Then in 1844, Leichhardt began an exploration northwards to the Gulf of Carpentaria and then west to Port Essington. Pastoral expansion and mineral exploration began to follow northwards and was met with determined opposition by Aborigines. "Two decades of violence, from the opening of the Moreton Bay District, preceded the establishment of the colony of Queensland" (Rowley 1972:157). The land exploration of Cape York Peninsula did not commence until Kennedy's expedition of 1848 from Rockingham Bay overland to Cape York. Major white encroachment on this region was spearheaded soon after by miners, and this led to intensive points of conflict with Aborigines at the mining fields which directly impacted upon creeks and waterholes.

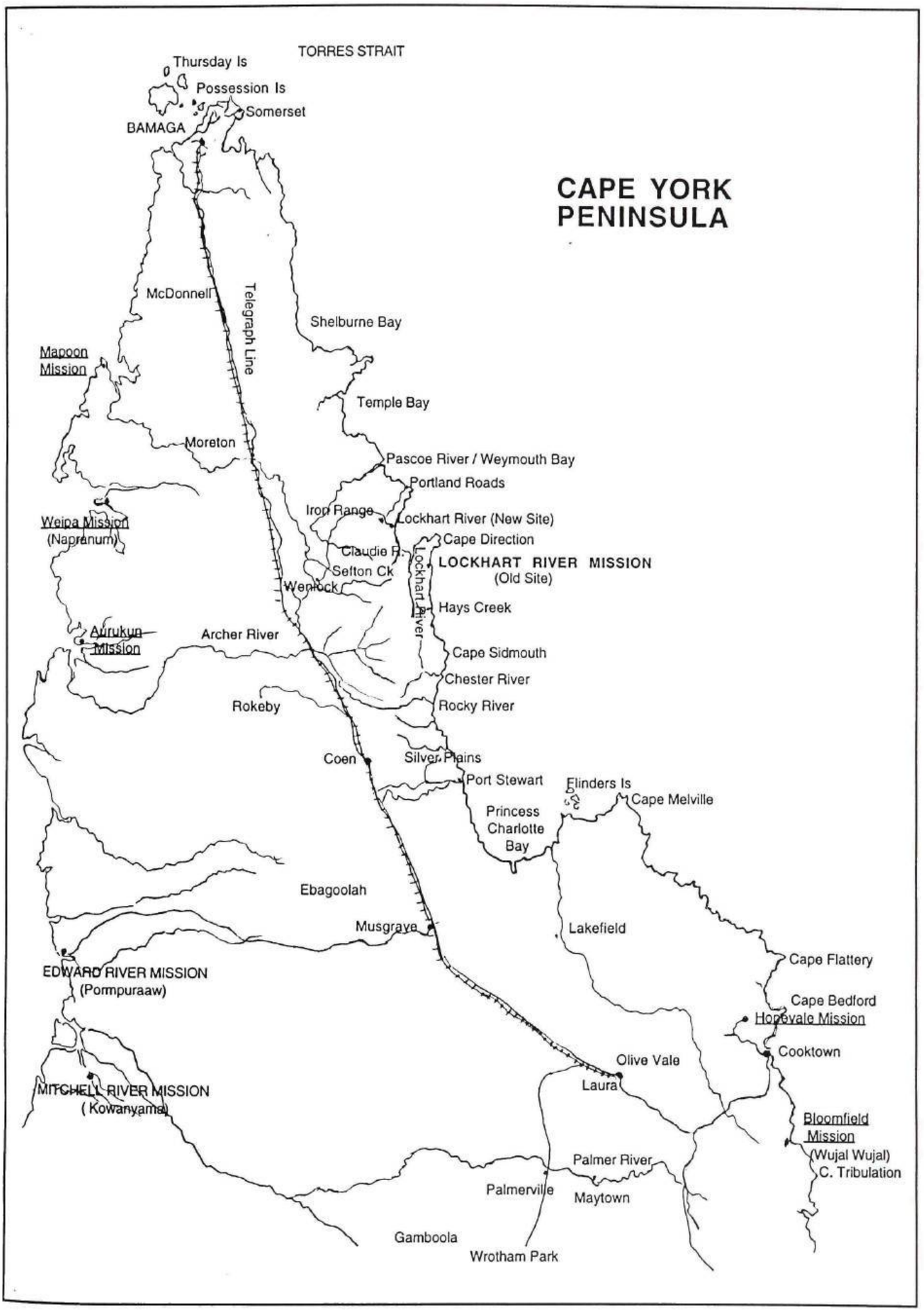
> The psychology of the digger, involving as it did the rapid acquisition of wealth and prompt departure from a field, precluded peaceful agreement. For the Aborigines, the miner proved an even more ruthless foe than the pastoralist (Fitzgerald 1982:208).

Exploitation of sea resources began in the Torres Strait with a small trade in beche-de-mer in 1840s and the discovery of pearl shell in 1868. The lugger industries that developed in the following decades extended down the east coast, impacting on coastal Aboriginal groups (Loos 1982:118-125).

Aboriginal responses in the north were a mixture of violent attack, particularly on land, due to provocation, dispossession and cultural infringements, and also accommodation, when the exchange of cheap labour for alien articles and new experiences was attractive or necessary (Loos 1982:9). I will outline the land impact in the wider region of Cape York Peninsula first, before examining the sea impact in the Lockhart River region.

4.1.1. Early exploration and dispossession on Cape York Peninsula

On April 22, 1770, Captain Cook took possession of the east coast for King George III by hoisting the British flag on Possession Island off the tip of Cape York (Fraser 1988:19). This event marked the beginning of sporadic visits by British sailors, explorers, naturalists, shipwreck victims and escaped convicts to the northern shores.


TORRES STRAIT
Thursday Is
Possession Is
Somerset
BAMAGA
CAPE YORK PENINSULA
McDonnell
Telegraph Line
Shelburne Bay
Mapoon Mission
Temple Bay
Moreton
Pascoe River / Weymouth Bay
Portland Roads
Weipa Mission (Napranum)
Iron Range
Lockhart River (New Site)
Cape Direction
Claudie R.
Lockhart River
LOCKHART RIVER MISSION (Old Site)
Sefton Ck
Wenlock
Hays Creek
Aurukun Mission
Archer River
Cape Sidmouth
Chester River
Rokeby
Rocky River
Coen
Silver Plains
Port Stewart
Flinders Is
Cape Melville
Princess Charlotte Bay
Ebagoolah
Musgrave
Lakefield
Cape Flattery
EDWARD RIVER MISSION (Pormpuraaw)
Cape Bedford
Hopevale Mission
Cooktown
Olive Vale
Laura
MITCHELL RIVER MISSION (Kowanyama)
Bloomfield Mission (Wujal Wujal)
C. Tribulation
Palmer River
Palmerville
Maytown
Gamboola
Wrotham Park

Flinders began charting the coast of Cape York Peninsula in 1802 while inland exploration began with Leichhardt's exploration to the Mitchell River and Gulf in 1844, and then the disastrous expedition mounted by Edmund Kennedy to Cape York in 1848 (Macgillivray 1852 I:82). Leichhardt's reports indicated the pastoral potential of north Queensland while the Kennedy experience contributed to giving Aborigines an evil reputation (Loos 1982:16).

Kennedy's large party of thirteen men, twenty-eight horses and one hundred sheep, plus three carts and heavy equipment, inevitably encountered hostility on the slow trek. They faced threatening groups, fired grass and spears which forced them to abandon carts and equipment. The group weakened and dwindled, so that Kennedy had to leave eight men at Weymouth Bay and another three at Shelburne Bay. Finally Kennedy was killed at Escape River while Jackey Jackey escaped to Port Albany. Only two others survived at the Pascoe River in Weymouth Bay (Carron 1852).

Further conflict occurred on Cape York Peninsula with the 10-month trek from Rockhampton in 1864 of the Jardine brothers Frank and Alexander, to deliver cattle to the new settlement at Somerset. They followed a route along the flat lands of western Cape York Peninsula, and their approach was typical of the pioneer takeover mentality – expect the worst, treat opposition as aggression and respond likewise with fire power. They dubbed the severest conflict, in which at least thirty Aborigines were killed, the "battle of the Mitchell" (Jardine 1867:35).

At Cape York, initial good relations struck by artist Brierly and naturalist Macgillivray (Moore 1979) were quickly reversed by John Jardine, who was sent there in 1863 as Commissioner of Crown Lands and Police Magistrate, to establish the new settlement called Somerset (Jack 1922 I:340, Sharp 1992:25-26). Dispossession rapidly become a reality as the settlement developed. Jardine did not believe in fraternising or allowing the

Aborigines into the settlement, and Aboriginal attitudes soon became hostile (Sharp 1992:26). John Jardine's antagonistic approach was intensified following the arrival of his sons Frank and Alexander Jardine after their overland journey. Their oppressive style became entrenched when Frank Jardine was appointed local Police Magistrate in 1868, and the pattern was continued by Henry Chester in the position 20 months later (Sharp 1992:65-71). "To the settlers at Somerset, the Yadhaigana were 'hostile and warlike blacks' who cut across the peaceful path of their progress. Within a quarter of a century they had almost disappeared" (Sharp 1992:25-6).

Clashes with Aborigines led to a response of open warfare with the settlers by 1868. The missionaries, Jagg and Kennett who arrived at Somerset early in 1867, say that this began from a false accusation soon after the settlement opened. "One of the Aborigines was accused of stealing an axe (subsequently found *not to have been stolen*) and on his refusing to give it up, he was flogged as an example to the others" (Jagg in Moore 1979:252). The Aborigines responded to the insult by attacking any vulnerable white, including seamen, while punitive raids in return led to a decimation of the Yadhaigana, Gudang and Undayamo groups (Sharp 1992:27-28). The Jardines also made life very difficult for the missionaries, who eventually had to abandon their work with the Aborigines (Moore 1979:237-256) Their attempts to obtain an inquiry into the settlement were thwarted by the Government's determination to support their officers at Somerset regardless of their actions (Sharp 1992:45-60).

4.1.2. Mining contact, further exploration and pastoral dispossession

Mining in the south of the continent generally followed on from the beginnings of settlement and pastoral expansion. In the north of Queensland, however, mining initiated white expansion, and was the stimulus for the steadier pastoral industry. As Fitzgerald put it, "Gold did more to bring Europeans to Queensland and to establish white settlement in Queensland tropics than any pastoral or agricultural product ever did" (1982:179). The success of significant goldfields led to further exploration and

discoveries to the north. The Ravenswood field (1868) led to the Etheridge goldfield in 1870 and Charters Towers field in 1872. Exploration north to the southern Peninsula by Hann and then by Mulligan, led to the Palmer River gold rush in 1873 and "brought to life the port of Cooktown" (Bolton 1972:53). The goldrushes were devastating to Aborigines as hundreds of miners overran the land and its resources.

Pressures on the Palmer field led some to venture further north, and to the beginning of European intrusion by land in the Lockhart River region. Another bonanza did not turn up, but sporadic and smaller-scale prospecting did follow. In August 1876, Robert Sefton led a well-armed expedition into the Peninsula and this resulted in a short-lived field at Coen. The following year, Sefton tried again further north to the headwaters of the Pascoe River. His group included Billy Lakeland and Hughie Lockhart. They made small finds of gold at various places including the Lockhart basin and Claudie River (Pike 1982:81). Lakeland named the Claudie after his son (Lack 1962:986). According to Pike, "the Aborigines in the Lockhart had been friendly; they even drew the white men 'mud maps' to show them the best trails through the mountains and scrub" (Pike 1989:81). This friendly contact is possibly an indication of prior accommodation through contact by sea in the Lockhart coastal region. They were to find a less friendly reception at the Pascoe and over the Sefton in Kaantju country on their way back.

Robert Logan Jack also explored north from Cooktown to the Archer headwaters in 1879 and to Lloyd Bay and Somerset in a second expedition in 1880. He was appointed Government Geologist of Queensland in 1877 and had the task of investigating the mineral resources of the north (Jack 1915:200; Pike 1989:66). Jack headed north from Cooktown on 26 November 1879. On 12 January 1880, he and his party came to a hill overlooking Lloyd Bay and named the river flowing into it the Lockhart, after a Scottish friend (Jack 1915:208, 1922:548, 645; Dick 1913:15). He encountered various skirmishes with Aborigines en route, and near Shelburne Bay on March 9, suffered a spear wound in the neck and escaped to Somerset (Jack 1015:214-7).

Bradford also explored the region in 1883, but further to the west to examine a route for the overland telegraph line to Cape York. He was not attacked, possibly because the country was poorer and because the Aborigines were more cautious following experience of the Jardines' brutality in the northern region (Pike 1981:111, Bradford 1937:1015-6). Further intrusion occurred with the erection of the telegraph line from 1884 to 1886. During construction, stations were erected at Musgrave, Coen, McDonnell and Moreton, and the Native Mounted Police were used to protect the gangs. Aborigines retaliated with isolated attacks, spearing of horses and bullocks, and pilfering of stores and copper wire (Jack 1922 II:674-5, Lack 1962:970-1).

Pastoral dispossession on Cape York Peninsula began along the regions of the telegraph line with the opening of Wrotham Park between the Mitchell and Walsh rivers in 1973, followed by Gamboola station in 1879. Towards the east coast, Lalla Rookh was founded in 1882 on the Stewart River near Coen, and then Rokeby station to the west of Coen in 1884. Others stations were opened in the Princess Charlotte Bay region, including Olive Vale, Laura and Lakefield, in the 1870s and early 1880s.[3] Settlers faced concerted opposition from Aborigines who speared cattle and killed a number of the settlers, including Edward Watson at Pine Tree Station in 1888 and Charles Massey at Lalla Rookh in 1885 (Lack 1962:963-6).

William Lakeland discovered gold at the Rocky River, south of Lockhart River, in 1893, and proclaimed it a gold field in 1897 (Jack 1915:223). The field was soon exhausted by the 300 diggers who rushed there (Lack 1962:985-6). The small-scale prospecting and finds within an arc around the Lockhart River basin (bounded by Rocky River – Coen – Wenlock – Pascoe) meant that the impact of mining was intrusive upon Aborigines, but less devastating than that further south, at least to the east of the range. The rugged terrain and the danger of Aboriginal attack no doubt contributed to rapid retreat when

3 Information provided by Bruce Rigsby, 8 January, 1995.

finds were exhausted. Billy Clarmont and Charlie Omeenyo of Lockhart River have recorded an account of 'Old Paddy' and his guerilla attacks upon isolated miners and Chinese merchants. He speared them and took their food in defiance of white and black police (Clarmont & Omeenyo 1986:193-204).

4.1.3. Contact by Sea

Pre-settlement surveys by the British were the relative calm before the storm in coastal contact. Contact with Aborigines was minimal although not without the spearing and subsequent death of a sailor from the *Fly* at Cape Direction in 1843 (Chase 1980:92). Loos summarises:

> There were six major Royal Navy colonialist expeditions into North Queensland waters prior to 1861: Cook and Banks in the *Endeavour* in 1770, Flinders in the *Investigator* in 1802, Phillip Parker King's surveys between 1818 and 1822, first in the *Mermaid* and later in the *Bathurst,* Wickham and Stokes in the *Beagle* between 1838 and 1842, Blackwood with naturalist Beete Jukes in the *Fly* between 1842 and 1846, and Owen Stanley with naturalists Macgillivray and Thomas Huxley in the *Rattlesnake* between 1846 and 1850 (Loos 1982:8).

The mild approach of surveyors and naturalists was soon overtaken by the mercenary interests of other seamen, who began to encroach more upon land and sea resources. Loos highlights the case of the *Will o' the Wisp* plying for sandalwood as an example. Unconvincingly, they tried to cover up their provocation of Aborigines which led to violent exchanges and Aboriginal deaths (Loos 1982:10).

Exploitation of sea resources had begun by 1840 with a small trade in beche-de-mer to the far east. Growth was rapid, as in 1874 over 60 tons had been taken, while in 1880 the count was 198 tons, and in 1883, 342 tons. In 1889 over 100 boats were licensed to the beche-de-mer industry. The pearl shell industry began a little later and grew from 5 vessels in 1870 to 109 vessels in 1877 (Loos 1982:118, 120). Beche-de-mer gathering and processing was less skilled, but more labour intensive than collecting pearl shell. According to the Fisheries Commissioner, W Saville-Kent, the crews in 1890 included mainland Aborigines as well as Torres Strait and South Sea Islanders (Loos 1982:123-4). The rapid expansion of industries grew upon the poorly controlled exploitation of local

labour, and coastal contact in this period continued to be risky. Unwitting or intentional provocation led to numerous deaths of seamen and harsh retaliations. Considerable friction was caused by the failure of seamen to return Aborigines to their homeland in order to retain their labour (Loos 1982:124-6; Chase 1980:98). Reports of the 1870s indicate the working of Aborigines without written agreements, and widespread kidnapping of men, women and children, and violent retaliations. Other behaviour by seamen exacerbating this situation were heavy drinking, exploitation of women, and a reluctance to testify against one another about atrocities:

> .. the abuses associated with the fisheries were very serious, common, harmful to relations between the intruders and the Aborigines, destructive of the traditional Aboriginal societies, and a revealing reflection on the men associated with the industry and the government that failed to control the abuses known for thirty years (Loos 1982:127).

The missionaries Ward and Hey at Mapoon Mission, which commenced in 1891, brought some control to this recruitment, and also drew hostility from the recruiters (Harris 1990:491; Chase 1980:103).

Policies and practices regarding Aborigines of both Governments and Churches in Queensland will now be examined as further background to the specific experience of the Lockhart River Mission.

4.2. Government Policy for Aborigines in Queensland

The assumed policy of settlement was dispossession of Aboriginal land for the purposes of exploiting its resources for colonial settlement and industry, and the exclusion of Aboriginal people. The same pattern of contact conflict, destruction of many, and survival of some Aborigines without the access to resources to maintain their own mode of production and lifestyle, continued in Queensland. Early Government policy supported the pastoralists' objectives and the use of force against Aboriginal opposition, including the use of Native Mounted Police (Loos 1982:160). Reynolds notes:

> "Aborigines received little sympathy beyond an annual grant of blankets and an abortive attempt to establish a few reserves in the 1870s. Policy was dominated by the desire to 'disperse' the Aborigines from in front of the advancing tide of

> settlement. But by the end of the century the need for a comprehensive policy had become starkly apparent. In 1897 the colonial parliament swung to the opposite extreme, introducing protective legislation which remained virtually intact until 1965" (Reynolds 1989:195).

During the late nineteenth century, it was widely believed that Aborigines were a 'doomed race', due to influence of social Darwinism and the evident drastic dissolution of Aboriginal society (Fitzgerald 1982:210). Such was the immediate effect of the articulation of Aboriginal and capitalist modes of production. The ongoing effect was the establishment of the typical parameters of colonial social relations, described by Loos as a 'stratified system', "with a superior white caste and an inferior black caste" (Loos 1982:161). Fringe camps of dispossessed Aborigines were an expression of the relationship – under curfew, excluded from close proximity, but useful for cheap domestic labour and sexual exploitation of women, and subject to disease, alcohol, opium and malnutrition (Fitzgerald 1982:209). Aborigines were generally excluded from health or education services for fear of contamination or fear that Aborigines might exploit these services. Bureaucratic controls by police and other government instrumentalities to maintain the social distance developed well before the necessities of the colonial relationship were expressed in the 1897 Aboriginal Protection Act (Loos 1982:161-8).

In 1875, some of the Liberals supported moves for reform of Aboriginal conditions, and they were encouraged by the ability of a reserve at Mackay to provide Aboriginal labour for the sugar industry. These reform moves were retarded by political division by 1878 and reversed after the Conservatives won power in 1879. Several Aboriginal reserves were disbanded, and Aborigines were further marginalised by the new premier McIlwraith's "scorn for the dispossessed 'losers' of colonial society" (Fitzgerald 1982:212). Pragmatic considerations, however, led some pastoralists to come to terms with Aborigines and 'let them in' to a degree necessary to quell their hostility and gain cheap labour. Similarly, half-starved survivors of the rainforest regions were rationed and employed in agriculture (Fitzgerald 1982:214-5).

4.2.1. The 1897 Act and Protection

Archibald Meston, parliamentarian for a short time, and journalist, gave considerable attention to Aboriginal conditions. He travelled widely, including to Cape York, and wrote articles and letters for the Brisbane press. He advocated special legislation to deal with Aboriginal affairs, and in 1895, the Home Secretary, Tozer, requested him to prepare a report with this in view (Loos 1982:172). In his report, Meston rejected the doomed race theory, advocated the appointment of protectors and the isolation of Aborigines from the degrading effects of white contact in reserves, and condemned both the Native Mounted Police and settlers for their abuses of Aborigines. He felt that missionary efforts were wasted on the older generation and favoured concentration on the children who were more readily resocialised:

> Noble work has been done among the children, for there the missionary had a clear field and virgin soil. In that case they moved the young savage forward one stage of civilisation. The next generation would move forward another stage, and the third or fourth would settle in the agricultural stage, useful to themselves and mankind.
>
> But to effect this gradual transition there must be certain essentials, chief of which is *complete isolation of their social life from contact with the white races* (Meston 1895:25).

Meston supported his argument for complete isolation by referring to Canadian and American experience with native Indians (Meston 1895:14). Meston's report is a mixture of sympathetic ideas and conventional evolutionary thinking – abolishing the Native Mounted Police, retention of language, making of weapons, laws and customs, but only in harmony with community management, a firm rule of law, "regular periods for work, play, idleness, and sleep" and the removal of any "men or women of peculiarly discordant disposition" (Meston 1895:26). The Commissioner of Police, W E Parry-Okeden prepared a report in response, defending the Native Mounted Police, (stating that they were only following previous policy to 'disperse' Aborigines), further condemning the violence of settlers, and advocating the establishment of more Missions with Government support (Parry-Okeden 1897, Loos 1982:172-7). These reports culminated in *The Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act* of 1897. Protection meant provision for the segregation of Aborigines in closed reserves and the

appointment of protectors with authority to control their employment and movements (Fitzgerald 1982:210-220; Rowley 1972: 177-185). The Act defined Aborigines as any Aboriginal inhabitant of Queensland and any half-caste living or associating with them. The Minister was given wide powers to remove Aborigines to and from reserves and to restrict white access to reserves (Reynolds 1989:195-9).

The ideological focus of the Act is expressed in racial terms, as Hartwig expected (1978:131), in intentions to recast Aboriginal characteristics through institutional control and resocialisation. This masks the colonial intent to exclude Aborigines from disrupting and being disrupted by the expanding capitalist mode, and to resocialise them as a people both subservient and useful to the dominant class. Meston gives some expression to this by stating, "It may be said that the natives could be most easily preserved by leaving them undisturbed on their native hunting grounds, but as the conditions of colonisation preclude all possibility of anything of the kind, we must accept some practical alternatives and make the best of it" (Meston 1895:27). Loos notes, "These concepts of (a) prolonged tutelage while socially isolated from European society and (b) the usefulness of Aborigines as a source of unskilled labour were to be two of the most important assumptions of Queensland's policy" (Loos 1982:173). Many colonialists felt that they were atoning for the destructive effects of settlement, and also assumed that Aborigines would still die out.

4.2.2. The Protectors

In 1898, Meston and Roth were appointed the first protectors for the southern and northern regions under the Commissioner of Police, and Roth became the sole Chief Protector in 1904 (Long 1970:95-6, Chase 1980:104). Roth investigated the recruitment of Aborigines and Islanders in the northern fisheries around the turn of the century and found widespread abuse, including virtual imprisonment, abuse of women and non-payment of wages, so that some crew even ran off with the boats to escape (Loos 1982:135f). Permits were now required to recruit Aborigines, and Roth was vigorous in

prosecuting offences, but the fact that he continued to urge the resumption of land for reserves indicates that action was slow (Chase 1980:100).

Prior to the 1897 Act, some efforts had been made to establish protective Aboriginal reserves. Those in the south were short-lived or closed by Premier McIlwraith's withdrawal of support. Those established in the far north were more enduring. The Lutherans started Cape Bedford (Hopevale) in 1886 and Bloomfield in 1887 (but it closed in 1901 and re-opened in 1957). The Presbyterians followed with Mapoon in 1891, and the first Anglican Mission at Yarrabah near Cairns was instigated by John Gribble in 1892. Others followed later, including Presbyterian Missions at Weipa (1898), Aurukun (1904), Mornington Island (1914); Anglican Missions on Cape York Peninsula at Mitchell River (1904), Lockhart River (1924) and Edward River (1938); the Seventh Day Adventist Mission at Mona Mona in 1913, and the Plymouth Brethren Mission at Doomadgee in 1931. Attempts were made to establish government reserves and this gained impetus after the establishment of Barambah (later Cherbourg) in 1904. Taroom followed in 1911, Hull River in 1916, Palm Island in 1919 and Woorabinda in 1927. These institutions included pastoral, agricultural and educational activities based on a village-style settlement and it was a fond hope that such settlements would become self-supporting (Long 1970:93-96, 143; Lockley 1957:19-20; Horton 1994:713; Fitzgerald 1984:510). Rowley notes the colonial pattern in these segregated institutions:

> These missions resembled those of the colonial world in that they conducted economic enterprises for profit to help meet the expenses incurred. From the time of the first missions in Australia, government had contributed to mission costs, even if only by making land available. But the Queensland government was paying small subsidies for education. . . . The missions were there in permissive occupancy; no Aboriginal tenure right was legally established. It was like all other reserves in Australia, created by declaring Crown lands within its limits to be reserve lands for use by the department for administration of the Aboriginal legislation (Rowley 1972:247-8).

Amendments made to the 1897 Act in 1901, extended powers of the Protectors, including the requirement of his permit for a non-Aborigine to marry an Aboriginal woman, the control of Aboriginal property by the Protector, and the requirement for wages to be paid

to, and controlled by, the Protector (via the police). The latter provision was further tightened in 1904, while in 1919 Aboriginal wage-earners were permitted to receive a small proportion for pocket money, 20% for young boys, 25% for single men and 50% to 66% for married men with families (Lockley 1957:40-1). Portion of the accumulated funds were used in general administration costs in further development of settlements and Missions (Long 1970:98-9). Wright comments:

> From 1901 onwards, no Aboriginal in Queensland, nor even a part-Aboriginal, could count on remaining among his kin, or in the places from which his life was drawn and on which his spirit depended. They were now wholly in the power of the Protectors and the State, whether in marriage, ownership of property, or choice of their place of living. There is no comment in the debate which gives any indication that the bond of land and birthplace to an Aboriginal was understood (Wright 1981:269).

Control over mixed marriages was related to the emergence of the white Australia policy at the time of Federation. Mixed cohabitation was condoned during most of the nineteenth century while there was a shortage of white women (Franklin 1976:74). The white Australia policy arose, not so much from racism towards Aborigines, who did not pose an economic threat, but from the increasing immigration of Chinese, which aroused fears of economic threat as mining incomes declined. Aborigines became affected when there were sufficient white women, and when "white Australia decided that miscegenation was sinful; half-castes, who had formerly been regarded as white, were now placed in the black category; they were seen as a threat to 'snow-white' Australia" (Franklin 1976:80).

Roth was succeeded as Protector in 1905 by R B Howard, who continued advocacy of the creation of reserves for the protection and maintenance of Aboriginal life. However, J W Bleakley, who succeeded Howard in 1913, gave greater emphasis to the resocialisation or 'civilising' of Aborigines, particularly through the religious and moral influence of Christian Missions. Bleakley's approach marked the advent of the Protector as the all-powerful instrument of the Act, a pattern followed by his long-serving successors, O'Leary and Killoran. Church officials and missionaries became agents of

Government policy, and were constrained and directed by the controlling influence of the Protector/ Director in the development of Missions over the next sixty years.

Bleakley felt that the employment of Aborigines in the labour market had only increased their degeneration. He became particularly concerned with the increasing numbers of 'half-castes', and attempted to separate them from Whites and prevent mixed-marriages (Long 1970:97-8). Amendments in 1934 made the latter an offence and widened the category of mixed descent persons. The depression of the early 1930s reduced Aboriginal employment drastically and led many to move to the settlements to survive. This increased the significance of reserves and their costs, but reduced their ability to become self-supporting. Early ideals of the transformation of Aboriginal life were unrealised as reserves and missions turned Aborigines into 'inmates' dependent on the supportive structures:

> One problem is that, because settlements have provided for the basic needs of Aborigines, they have tended to immobilise them, often in areas where there are few jobs and little potential for development. The way in which settlements have provided for Aborigines, their institutional character, tends to lead to the kind of stagnation which exacerbates this problem. . . . People tend to become passive, 'unable either to think of, or to fight for, changes whose need they are content merely to grumble about' and unable and unwilling to leave the familiar environment, where they feel safe, and to make a successful adjustment to life 'outside'. . . . Aborigines in all the settlement communities have so obviously lost their independence (and much more than their economic independence is lost) their attitude has tended, or is tending, to become one of 'hostile dependency'. As Rowley has pointed out, this institutional situation typically entails having 'two communities under stress—that which is controlled, and that which does the controlling' (Long 1970:181 quoting Hauser 1962:35 and Rowley 1962:260).

The government response to such passivity and hostility was to intensify control in order to give impetus to programs of resocialisation. A Conference of Federal and State officials in Canberra in 1937 expressed the view that 'half-castes' should be educated for eventual absorption into the white community and children of detribalised 'full-bloods' be also educated to white standards, but for "employment in lucrative occupations, which will not bring them into economic or social conflict with the white community" (in Reynolds 1989:207-8). This was also the aim for children of the 'semi-civilised' who

were to be maintained in small local reserves, while the 'uncivilised' were to be preserved in 'normal tribal state' in 'inviolable reserves'.

4.2.3. The 1939 Act and Autocracy

In Queensland, the various amendments were consolidated and powers of control further extended in 1939 in the *Aboriginals Preservation and Protection Act.* Those considered sufficiently Europeanised could now seek exemption from its provisions (Fitzgerald 1984:509-10). The Director of Native Affairs (previously Chief Protector) was able to exercise enormous control over Aborigines and these powers were refined again in 1947.

> This Act and the Regulations of 1945, increased the already wide powers of the Director of Native Affairs in matters concerning property management, deceased estates, Aboriginal courts, Aboriginal police and gaols. The Director was made legal guardian of all Aboriginal minors (under 21), and was given authority to deal with offences by non-Aborigines, including "the harbouring and illegal employment of Aborigines" (Wearne 1980:15).

Much of this power was delegated to superintendents on reserves and Missions who could exercise virtually absolute control over the Aboriginal 'inmates'. "Any difference from a prison farm was not marked" (Rowley 1972:248). The superintendent's permission was required to enter or leave the reserve, and for any cultural practices. Health and medical requirements could be enforced and children could be confined to dormitories until the age of 16. The emphasis in Government policy had now moved beyond protection to active resocialisation to the expectations of the dominant European class, and foreshadowed the policy of assimilation which was officially adopted by the Queensland Government in the 1950s (Wearne 1980:15-16).

The effects of World War II interrupted this system of isolated enculturation, due to the urgent need for labour in the pastoral and agricultural industries. "Mobile gangs were formed on the settlements and sent to help with the harvesting of cane, maize, arrowroot, cotton, peanuts, and other crops from Cairns south. ... Settlement development was curtailed and the available labour was used primarily for food production on the reserves" (Long 1970:99). Fears that Aborigines would collaborate with the Japanese

also led to the disbandment of Lockhart River Mission for a short period, and the removal of Hopevale Aborigines to Woorabinda community 1500km to the south (Chase 1980:116-7; Horton 1994:477, 628).

As labour demand fell at the end of the war, the emphasis returned to the development of the settlements both materially and in efforts towards self-support. A dual emphasis developed in the material development of separate settlements or missions and in the expectation that, in the longer term, more and more would gain exemption from the Act to live and work in the wider community. This was given greater expression from 1951 when the Commonwealth and State authorities adopted the aim of assimilation. One belated consequence occurred in 1960 when all Aborigines became eligible for Commonwealth social service pensions and benefits (Gale & Brookman 1975:68-9).

4.2.4. The 1965 Act and Assimilation

Legislative changes to give greater effect to the policy of assimilation did not occur in Queensland until the *Act to Promote the Well-being and Progressive Development of the Aboriginal Inhabitants of the State and of the Torres Strait Islanders* was passed in 1965 with regulations gazetted in April 1966 (Long 1970:99-101). Some restrictions were lifted, including the Director's powers of guardianship of minors, permission for marriage, and sexual relations between Aboriginal females and non-Aboriginal males, but the thrust of the legislation remained one of control and discipline towards assimilation (Fitzgerald 1984:515-7). The two somewhat conflicting strands of practice were intensified – to develop settlements as 'normal' town communities and to move towards the abandonment of settlements through "more emphasis than in the past on helping Aborigines from the settlements to move into normal communities and that some pressure might be applied to induce people to make the move" (Long 1970:102). The latter emphasis was reflected in the 1961 coercive view of assimilation as defined by State and Federal Ministers:

> The policy of assimilation means ... that all Aborigines and part-Aborigines are expected eventually to attain the same manner of living as other Australians and to live as members of a single Australian community, enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same responsibilities, observing the same customs and

influenced by the same beliefs, hopes and loyalties as other Australians (in Pittock 1979:18-9).

A softer definition, introducing the element of choice and deleting 'beliefs', was expressed in 1962 by the Commonwealth and in 1965 by Queensland:

> The policy of assimilation seeks that all persons of Aboriginal descent will choose to attain a similar manner and standard of living to that of other Australians and live as members of a single Australian community – enjoying the same rights and privileges and influenced by the same hopes and loyalties as other Australians.
> Any special measures taken are regarded as temporary measures, not based on race, but intended to meet their need for special care and assistance to make the transition from one stage to another in such a way as will be favourable to their social, economic and political advancement (in Reynolds 1989:209; Wearne 1980:17).

The assimilation policy implicitly rejected any value or continuation of Aboriginal cultural practice and life-style. Special measures in the 1965 Act to move from protection to transition, included partly elected community Councils controlling local by-laws, Aboriginal police and courts, and personal bank books. However, the Director, through the district officer or community manager, still had powers of veto and final control (Wearne 1980:19).

The assimilation policy was not officially expressed in the Queensland parliament until 1957 during debate on bauxite leases for Comalco on Weipa and Mapoon Aboriginal Reserves (Wearne 1980:21). Once again, capitalist exploitation of land was the over-riding priority which made Aborigines and their interests peripheral. The emergence of these policies and the squeezing of funds for missions, brought considerable pressure to bear on Christians Missions in Queensland and led to Anglican Missions being transferred to government control by 1967.

4.3. Christian mission in Queensland

Early Missions near Moreton Bay before the separation of Queensland, followed the same pattern of failure as those to the south, due to the proximity and destructive effects of European settlement, as well as the inadequacy of missionaries for the task. The Moreton Bay penal settlement began in 1824 and the first Chaplain, appointed in 1829,

was ill, clashed with Captain Logan and was soon recalled to Sydney. There was a shortage of Anglican Chaplains due to limited colonial funds allocated for their support (Rayner 1962:20), and so the next Chaplain appointed in 1837, J C S Handt, was a co-opted Evangelical Lutheran missionary and was supported by the Church Missionary Society. "Handt unsuccessfully engaged in missionary work with the two or three hundred Aborigines who lived within the vicinity of the settlement" (Fitzgerald 1982:87; Rayner 1962:12, 381).

The Presbyterians also attempted to establish a low-cost Mission nearby in 1838 by inviting German Lutheran missionaries because they aimed to support themselves. The missionaries' lack of English, their preoccupation with buildings and civilising, and the competing settlement attractions of rum, tobacco and food, were factors which led to failure of the Mission in 1843 (Harris 1990:103-9). The Catholics attempted a Mission at Stradbroke Island in 1843 with four Passionate priests, three of them Italian and one Swiss. They expected the island to be isolated from settlement influences, but were quickly disappointed that this was not so. They too had communication difficulties and could not appreciate the mobile character of the Aboriginal life-style. The missionaries had all left by 1847 (Harris 1990:109-13). Fitzgerald notes, "The efforts of early missionaries like the Lutherans at Nundah did little to arrest the destruction of the Brisbane tribes" (Fitzgerald 1982:205).

Most of the Lutheran missionaries stayed either as farmers or to found Lutheran congregations in the expanding settlement, and they retained their interest in mission to Aborigines. This led to a Lutheran Mission at Mari Yamba near Proserpine in 1886 and it lasted until 1901. Another Lutheran missionary, Johannes Flierl, while delayed at Cooktown on the way to New Guinea, observed the Aboriginal situation and took the initiative to start a Mission at the Cape Bedford Reserve in 1886 (later to be Hopevale), confident of the support of his Mission Society and South Australian Synod. The Lutherans also opened the Bloomfield Mission in the following year. This Mission was

abandoned in 1901 (Harris 1990:484) but re-established in the 1957 [now known as Wujal Wujal] (Long 1970:143; Fitzgerald 1984:510).

The Presbyterians were also active in establishing Missions in the north beginning with Mapoon in 1886. Their interest was stirred by Moravian missionaries, in particular Frederick Hagenauer of Ramahyuck Mission in Victoria, who visited north Queensland in 1890 as part of a deputation (Harris 1990:485-6). This German influence from both Lutherans and Moravians is linked to the voluntarist approach to mission which arose from the Pietist movement in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The impetus for mission was personal faith and a sense of inspiration by the Holy Spirit. This was a breaking away from institutional and colonial controls which was an important influence in the development of Protestant missionary practice. (Bosch 1992:254-5).

The first Anglican Mission to be established in the far north at Yarrabah, near Cairns, was begun in 1892 by the determination of one person, the Rev John Gribble, and initially with little Church support. Gribble was a man fired against the injustice and oppression experienced by Aborigines, but his outspoken frankness and anger made enemies, and the controversy he aroused in Western Australia lost him support in the Church of England with its close ties to the pastoralists (Gribble 1884, 1886). His reputation followed him to Queensland and kept the Colonial Secretary and the Bishop of North Queensland from supporting him financially to begin with. John Gribble fell sick with malaria and had to pass the work of establishing the Yarrabah Mission to his son Ernest (Harris 1990:411-430, 499-511).

4.3.1. The Church of England and Missions in Queensland

Voluntarist approaches to mission influenced the evangelical side of the Anglican Church, but, as noted earlier, mission to Aborigines by the Anglican Church was slow to develop due to the early perception that mission was not needed in the colonies, the distractions and preoccupations of colonial and institutional duties, efforts to maintain

establishment privilege and the confidence of pastoralist members, financial constraints, establishment of conventional parishes for white settlers, and the low view of Aboriginal society.

The official missionary society of the Church of England, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG, Anglo-Catholic in emphasis) received some invigoration from the example of the evangelical movement from about 1820, and with the urgings of Bishop Broughton in 1834 began to realise the poor state of the church in the colonies. The thrust of mission, however, did not begin with missionaries, but with the development of a firmer structure for the Anglican Church in the colonies through the creation of colonial dioceses and the appointment of bishops to head them. This required considerable funding, and in 1841 the Fund for the Endowment of Additional Bishoprics in the Colonies was established. In advocating this fund, Bishop Blomfield of London stated that sending missionaries (i.e. Chaplains) to the colonies to establish the Church before sending bishops contradicted the nature of an episcopal Church which required "its chief pastor, to watch over, and guide, and direct the whole" (Rayner 1962:15). The Secretary of SPG also headed the Bishopric Fund, and the joint planning and funding ensured the structural establishment of the Anglican Church in the colonies. The growth of the Church in Queensland was part of this process (Rayner 1962:12-16, 381). With the structural base established, growth among its adherents could proceed and then missionary outreach to the 'heathen' could follow.

This institutional approach contrasts with the more flexible approach of missionary societies, which raised funds and sent missionaries into new fields to begin from scratch and withdraw if need be. While the institutional process was going on in Queensland, Anglican missionary work among Aborigines was not rated a priority. The work that did begin depended very much on the initiative of individuals, and the Church had difficulty in providing financial support due to the loss of state aid after the separation of Queensland, the end of SPG grants in 1881 for the support of clergy, the vagaries of

financial giving by church members, and the effects of depressed economic conditions (Rayner 1962:102-3, 264).

Missionary work was a goal, largely unrealised, of the first two bishops of Brisbane, as the Anglican Church began to establish itself in Queensland. The SPG supported the short-lived Mission at Somerset in the north in the 1860s, following pressure on the English Government by Governor Bowen (Rayner 1962:174), and there was some effective work among the Kanakas and Chinese in various parts of the colony. Yet up to 1890 positive results were very small as "bishops and clergy were often at their wit's end to keep up the basic work of the church among the white Christian population, and they had no surplus resources such as would have been needed for mission to the heathen" (Rayner 1962:381). Before 1890, mission to other ethnic groups was mostly the work of individual clergy or catechists among non-European people living in their parishes. The most notable was the work of Albert Mclaren at Mackay among 2000 Kanakas (Rayner 1962:382). The prejudice of his parishioners against this, however, eventually led to his resignation. "The white people are against my doing anything in the way of teaching them, their argument being that they pay me not to look after the souls of black but of white people" (Feetham 1928:38). After 1890, however, a change of attitude to mission and its achievements began to occur as the Church in the colony became more established.

4.3.2. Mission developments through ABM

Interest in establishing a New Guinea Mission followed McIlwraith's attempt to annexe Papua to Queensland in 1883. The two Queensland bishops, Hale and Stanton, resolved "to seek an official pledge from the government that the natives would be dealt with on Christian principles" and "that as the Australian church was in no state to organise a mission itself, it should approach the English missionaries societies to do so, with the promise of financial help from Australia" (Rayner 1962:383). There was deep concern that the pattern of Aboriginal degradation not be repeated (Wetherell 1977:13-14). The

Revd Albert Mclaren of Mackay, who had worked with the Kanakas, offered to start the mission, but died of malaria in 1891, soon after beginning the work. The next move was by Bishop Webber, successor to Hale as Bishop of Brisbane, who gave great energy to the task of following the preferred Anglican pattern of having a bishop appointed to head the work. His determination saw Bishop Stone-Wigg consecrated Bishop of New Guinea in 1898, although he had a difficult task and little financial support from the Australian Church in the early years (Rayner 1962:382-4).

The ABM was also dragged into support of mission to Australian Aborigines following the initiative of John Gribble in beginning Yarrabah Mission without any assurance of support from the government or from Bishop Barlow of North Queensland. The bishop later relented and provided a small stipend. The ABM agreed to recognise the Mission, but was unable to assist financially (Harris 1990:500-1). Meanwhile, Gribble set about raising funds and interest himself (Rayner 1962:385). After 5 months, John Gribble was too sick to continue, and passed the mantle to his son Ernest Gribble, who continued until 1908. From 1893, Ernest received a meagre stipend from the Diocese of Sydney for two years, and the "Mission thus became an A.B.M. Mission extra-diocesan to the Diocese of Sydney. It remained so until 1908" (Gribble 1928:55; Harris 1990:502-4).

4.3.3. The Diocese of Carpentaria

The Diocese of Carpentaria was separated from the Diocese of North Queensland in 1900, and included all of the Northern Territory, Cape York Peninsula north of Cairns, the Torres Strait Islands and the Gulf towns of Normanton, Karumba and Croydon. (The diocese included this impractical area to administer until 1968 when the Northern Territory became a separate diocese.) Bishop Barlow of North Queensland was the prime mover in establishing the new diocese (Rayner 1962:265-6). His main concerns were to provide better pastoral oversight of the growing population of the north and to create a smaller region of missionary endeavour. Again there is the preference for the establishment of a bishopric to oversee the development of the Church's mission.

Barlow gained the support of other bishops, including the Primate, and at the Lambeth Conference of 1897, he collected more than £10,000 to endow the new diocese.

There were economic handicaps from the start. For one thing, the limited membership base among the scattered European population could not support the traditional diocesan structure of bishops, cathedral and parish clergy. At the same time, the other ethnic groups presented a missionary situation requiring considerable outside support, and the diocese was founded 'at a time of economic and commercial depression and its European population was markedly declining'. (Rayner 1962:264) Bishop Barlow promoted Archdeacon Gilbert White as candidate for the new bishopric. The choice of White was a key factor in the survival of the diocese, as a conventional English bishop would not have survived the conditions of isolation, distance and lack of communication and finance. Gilbert White, on the other hand, was at home in the bush. The climate suited him for he had earlier come from England in 1885 for the warmer climate due to lung trouble. He had experienced the conditions and isolation of bush ministry in the Hughenden district where he had travelled hundreds of miles by bicycle, by horse or on foot, to visit stations (Rayner 1962:267-9; Bayton 1965:76-7; Church Standard, October 30, 1931:8).

White travelled extensively in the new diocese, and by 1910 the European settlements were served by resident clergy in eight parishes, and three Mission stations had commenced (Mitchell River, 1904; Roper River 1908; Moa Island 1908). However, at the same time the economic depression was having adverse effects. "The white population was only two-thirds of what it had been in 1901, the number of Asiatics was less, and the aborigines were believed to be a dying race" (Rayner 1962:270-1). England was no longer a strong source of financial support, and so the indomitable Gilbert White set about raising funds from the Australian Church with an annual trip south. In talking and writing he sought to share his personal experience of Aboriginal people and show that popular perceptions of their low humanity were false. Sharing some perceptions of

the time himself, he endeavoured "to show that the aborigines of Australia are by no means, even in their natural state, to be classed among the lowest races, while they have a receptivity and capacity for accepting Christian teaching which is often startling in its effect of their life and habits" (White 1925:1). Clearly he expected them to be resocialised and capable of it, but interestingly he tried to make his point by an account of their life-style showing indications of complexity and depth in patterns of reciprocity, language and religious understandings. He traced their misfortunes to the fact and brutalities of dispossession without recompense, and used a strong Biblical image to depict the resulting marginalised state of Aborigines and to elicit support:

> "I have always felt that the aboriginal is the Lazarus of Australia. Poor, ragged and sick with sores which are the result of contact with the diseases of the white man, hungry because he has been driven from the waterholes, where alone he can obtain food, in order that the cattle may not be disturbed, unable to defend himself against the wrongs which may be inflicted on him, he lies at the gate of Australia, so rich, so comfortable, and so well fed" (White 1925:8-9; in Chase 1988:121).

Support for Carpentaria developed slowly, as the southern dioceses were barely established themselves (Rayner 1962:271). "It was essentially the faith, perseverance and self-sacrifice of one man – Bishop Gilbert White – that enabled survival in those early years, and made possible the emergence of its later peculiar missionary significance" (Rayner 1962:272). The limitations that Bishop White faced were to remain largely a feature of the diocese to the present – a low proportion of white support in the population, extremes of distance and travel cost, high component of missionary work among Aborigines and Islanders using the cost-intensive mission-station approach, and constant dependence on financial support from outside the diocese.

4.3.4. ABM strengthened

The Australian Board of Missions began to develop importance as the official missionary board of the Anglican Church. In 1906 the Queensland Provincial Synod stimulated giving by recommending diocesan targets to support the ABM. A set-back occurred in 1909 when there was mismanagement in the ABM central office which led to a deficit of £5000. Archbishop Donaldson "urged the appointment of paid staff, and of provincial

organising secretaries, as a means of increasing income and handling it more efficiently". This was a turning point for the ABM. The board became revitalised, and income increased. In the period 1906 to 1920, annual missionary offerings of the province grew from £500 to £4000. This led to a steady expansion of staff and facilities at Yarrabah and in New Guinea, and the development of the work in the Diocese of Carpentaria.

4.3.5. Early Missions in the Diocese of Carpentaria

In 1904-5, Mitchell River Mission was founded near the west coast of Cape York Peninsula. Progress was slow and only 90 Aborigines were in residence after five years. In 1908, St. Paul's Mission was begun at Moa Island on a reserve set aside the previous year for Pacific Islanders. In 1914, the major mission work in the Torres Strait was handed over from the Congregationalist London Missionary Society to the Anglican Diocese of Carpentaria (Rayner 1962:390-3; Bayton 1965:54-9, 86-93, 106-10, 223). This was a large additional work for the diocese, giving a significantly different mission focus to that of Aborigines. Melanesian culture, particularly the differences in leadership and village agriculture/fishing, was more amenable to European resocialisation and hence mission work among Islanders was considered to be more attractive and fruitful than that among Aborigines. St. Paul's College was established in 1917 on Moa Island for the training of Islander clergy, beginning with four candidates. Two of them were made deacons in 1919 and later ordained priests (Rayner 1962:393-4, 480).

4.3.6. The Yarrabah experience

The establishment of the Anglican Mission at Yarrabah was considered a success by officials because of the discipline and control achieved by Gribble, and became seen as an example to follow in other regions (cf. A R H 1924:93). One of Gribble's strengths was his encouragement of Aboriginal leadership both in church and the community life. Several men were licensed lay readers, and an Aboriginal court was set up to handle disputes and misdeeds (Harris 1990:508). However, Yarrabah also experienced problems that became typical of wider experience in the Mission station approach. On the one hand, individuals resisted the Mission authority, and not all were amenable to all

the radical changes from their hunter-gatherer life-style and the expectations that they should adopt the social and religious standards of the Europeans. At times, missionaries like Gribble responded to resistance to social change by coercion and physical punishment (Harris 1990:510). On the other hand, it was frequently difficult to find the staff with the ability to adapt and work in the missions in a stable and helpful manner. Environmental difficulties were also experienced through occasional cyclones and the unsuitability of land for productive agriculture (Rayner 1962:391).

4.3.7. Development of interest in mission

Interest in missionary work began to develop in the new century, and one stimulus was the formation then of the Province of Queensland, linking together the four dioceses of Brisbane, Rockhampton, North Queensland and Carpentaria. ".. its blend of European, aboriginal, Papuan, Torres Strait islander, kanaka and Asian populations ... meant that missionary work was an integral part of the very existence of the province" (Rayner 1962:386). This advocacy of mission came more from the Church hierarchy than from public opinion, and the view was more towards the seemingly less degraded Melanesians, as in the advocacy of Archbishop Donaldson, who had a dream of Brisbane being the hub of mission to the Pacific Islands. The northern bishops, however, were expanding mission towards Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, and were seeking to "arouse a favourable public opinion" (Rayner 1969:387). Federation also marked the establishment of Australia as a nation, the ending of the pioneering stage and the beginnings of looking outwards, including a sense of responsibility to the Aborigines.

4.3.8. Post-war developments

Following World War 1, there was some extension of Aboriginal missions, but little change in policy. "Aboriginal missions still presented something of the aspect of nineteenth century philanthropy to a backward race, and there was relatively little evidence of clear and positive thinking about the future of the aborigines" (Rayner 1962:476). Further growth was hindered, however, by the vagaries of economic conditions. A crisis occurred again in the ABM in the early 1920's, due to the pressure

of increased commitments to missionary work, combined with the negative effect of inflation in the Australian economy. In 1922, the ABM was £15,000 in debt. This was halved by 1925, but an urgent call was issued to avoid drastic retrenchments (Needham 1924:136). In about 1928, a 'World Call to the Church' was published in England, depicting the urgency of the missionary task. This supported the bishops' pleas for greater support, and in 1929, missionary giving was at a record, giving new hope for expansion, but then such development was greatly restricted by the effects of the great depression. (Rayner 1962:477)

The chief missionary expansion in Queensland between the wars was in Carpentaria Diocese under Bishop Stephen Davies. Mitchell River continued at its new site under J W Chapman. There were attempts there to develop a small cattle industry. In 1924, Lockhart River Mission was established under Harry Rowan and a Government settlement was established at Cowal Creek. Both Chapman and Rowan served for lengthy periods and developed stability in the early years. They also experienced the frustrations of lack of adequate finances and lack of experienced and adequately trained staff. This hindered the objectives of introducing Aborigines to agricultural and pastoral industries, and intensified the problem of dependency of Aborigines on Mission structure. Bishop Davies was concerned not to stifle the transfer to European-style independence and initiative through such means of self-support, and he warned staff to avoid the temptation to provide handouts (Rayner 1962:477-8). Also at this time, the Church in the neighbouring diocese of North Queensland became concerned about fringe dwellers. The synod set up a committee in 1926 which advocated extension of the reserve system "and urged that the whole of Cape York Peninsula be made into an aboriginal reserve" (Rayner 1962:479). The low level of Government funding and the limited support raised through Church circles indicate a general lack of will to do much more than maintain Aboriginal lives and, to many minds, ease their passing, out of the way of colonial progress and out of mind, as 'people without history'.

4.4. *Queensland Anglican Policy for Aborigines*

With the work of establishing the structure and life of the Anglican Church in the Province of Queensland under way, the Church began developing its own policy toward Aborigines and urging it upon the Government . The various views expressed generally followed the Government approach of segregation and resocialisation, together with advocacy of the Mission station approach. The experience of Yarrabah Mission confirmed that Aborigines were not necessarily dying out and their decline could be reversed through such protection (Rayner 1962:555).

4.4.1. Segregation in Missions

The bishops issued a Pastoral Letter in 1910 which stated, "They have a right to live, and we have destroyed the environment in which alone they could freely and naturally exist" (Church Chronicle January 1911, in Rayner 1962:387). The Pastoral Letter gave four principles of policy for administration of Aborigines (Rayner 1962:388-9) –

1. *Principle of Segregation* – Aborigines should be separated in inviolable reserves for their protection and gradual development. This principle supported the Government policy of the time, which aimed to avoid exploitation, degradation and disruption to settlement, and was opposed to some commercial interests which wanted cheap labour.

2. *Principle of Self-Support* – Aborigines should be encouraged towards self-support, starting at least to take up agricultural or pastoral work. This reflects conventional views on social evolution and supported the Government policy of resocialisation.

3. *Moral and Spiritual Influences* – the Bishops considered that secular or social development of Aborigines on its own, as some advocated, would leave a moral and spiritual vacuum. This was a claim for a place for the Church in Aboriginal development, and was also a hint of the need for government assistance in the massive task.

4. *Reformatory Reserves* – 'lawless' Aborigines, should not be sent to Missions, but to special reformatory reserves. This reflected the problems encountered at

Yarrabah of an increase of 'incorrigible aborigines', and the colonial view of Aboriginal resistance.

4.4.2. Attempts to rethink policy

While both Church and Government agreed that segregation for protection was the only practical policy to protect Aborigines from exploitation and the unequal white competition, Bishop Gilbert White, in 1919, pointed out the inadequacy of the effort. In a report he prepared from a meeting of the Aboriginal Sub-Committee of the ABM (after he had left Carpentaria) he noted that the twelve denominational Missions in the north had contact with only a tenth of the estimated Aboriginal population of Australia. The report also shows awareness of the problems of dependency created by Missions. "The Mission native is more or less of a hot-house product. Many of the natural factors of life are necessarily eliminated. He is cared for in all things, and the discipline of the struggle for existence is removed" (White 1919:2). Aware of the limitations of current policy, he advocated a broader effort, in particular, "to develop the Aborigines and half-castes in such a way that they may be fitted to hold their own in the future, and to make them of real service to the State, while increasing and developing their self-respect" (White 1919:2). To achieve this White proposed that the Commonwealth, Queensland and Western Australian Governments, establish another twelve Aboriginal settlements across the north, with Churches providing Chaplains and Government-funded teachers, while the Governments provided infrastructure, health services and administration (Loos 1989:15-17). The Board endorsed the report, but the proposals were too massive for the minimalist approaches of the Governments, and it was not until after World War 2, that there was any real consideration of a longer-term policy in this assimilationist direction.

The ABM Chairman, the Rev J S Needham, in his *Report on the Aborigines of Australia* in 1923, stated that, contrary to the general trend, the Aboriginal birthrate in Church Missions exceeded the death rate.

> I maintain that the reason for the better state of affairs on the Mission stations is due to the policy of segregation. The black is not ready to live side-by-side with the white. (Needham 1923:7)

Varying the approach of White's report, he advocated that three large Reserves be set apart for Aborigines – the northern portion of Cape York Peninsula, eastern Arnhem Land and coastal Kimberley district. The conditions he envisaged for these reserves reveal a strong paternalism that allowed no room for Aboriginal opinion. They also included expectations of greater missionary involvement, depending on greater government funding, that were unrealistic in view of the difficulty that Churches experienced in recruiting suitable people, and the Governments' lack of will for such a comprehensive approach. Other points were:

2. That these reserves be locked up in such a way that only an Act of Parliament can open the door to White Settlers.

3. That provision be made for mining operations under conditions acceptable to both mining interests and those who have the welfare of the natives at heart...

4. That a Protector be appointed on each of the above reserves by each responsible Government. Such Protector to be above political interference.

5. That provisions be made for missionary operations subsidised by government support.

6. That Government Settlements be handed over to Churches willing to accept the responsibility (Needham 1923:10).

Bishop Stephen Davies, writing in The Carpentarian of January 1, 1924 as S C (i.e. Stephen Carpentaria), also approved of the Queensland approach of segregation for protection and gradual enculturation of Aborigines as advocated by the Chief Protector (Davies 1924:21). An anonymous writer, using the initials F H T L, supported this approach in the ABM Review of October 12, 1924, by expressing its positive benefit as demonstrating the reversal of the destruction of Aboriginal people, and by contrasting healthy mission dwellers with the degradation of fringe dwellers. The context is one which enables physical survival of Aborigines for religious, cultural and social transformation.

> The progress of land settlement by usurpation and force, the mere satisfaction of fleshly lusts by men of various shades, has accounted for recurring tragedies along the course of Australian history, and the diminution in numbers of the original inhabitants. . . . . The belated segregation upon reserves has been adopted as a means whereby the remnant may be saved, or given a chance to work out their own

> salvation in the future. Such a policy enables help to be given and works well in spite of very inadequate financial support; its object is laudable" (F H T L 1924:130).

Another writer with the initials A R H, in the ABM Review of August 12, 1924, saw the "civilising cultural service of missions" to be very important. The primary activity of saving souls from sin "produces effects on the man which compel other activities on the part of the missionary", that is, a spiritual transformation opens the way for social transformation in such ways as opening minds through education, industrial training, medical service and lifting the status of women. "Work will not save a man, but the absence of work may degrade him" (A R H 1924:92). Industrial training included building, agricultural and cattle developments. He saw Yarrabah as a strong example of such industrial training. Again, such attitudes reflected typical social evolutionary understandings of the late 19th century which placed all societies "somewhere along a continuum of progress which ranged from some primeval state at the zero pole to 'Civilized Man' at the higher extreme" (Chase 1970:25). European society was seen to be at the pinnacle of progress and Aboriginal society at the bottom of the scale (Chase 1970:29, 35).

4.4.3. Towards citizenship and assimilation

One person who gave considerable attention to Aboriginal affairs was A P Elkin, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sydney and Anglican priest. In *Citizenship for the Aborigines* in 1944, he reviewed the situation of the 1930s and described the approach as essentially a negative welfare effort. Quoting from his own address of 1933, he says: "the parliaments are concerned with the successful exploitation of the country by the *white* man; the *positive* policy is for him; a negative policy must suffice to protect the aboriginal owners from abuse, and maybe, smooth his dying pillow" (Elkin 1944:14). Protection in practice meant little more than segregated maintenance. "We were doing little more that trying to protect them from abuse, and to help the aged and sick where possible. ... The white man's occupation was protected" (Elkin 1944:14). At the time, Elkin was advocating a 'positive policy' that drew on the

Australian experience in Papua New Guinea and called for the Commonwealth Government to have overall oversight of Aboriginal policy and control, a separate Department for Aboriginal Affairs, a Commissioner and field officers, means of industrial training, consideration of tribal laws and customs, reserves in tribal territories, legislation for 'half-castes', and subsidies for Missions for specific care and education.

In 1944, Elkin was further advocating a national policy, and put forward ten general principles to guide the framing a policy of citizenship for Aborigines. He meant citizenship to be the ultimate aim for all persons of Aboriginal descent, but immediately only for 'half-castes' living independently in the community, i.e. already assimilated. Those living in isolated reserves could be granted citizenship if deemed acceptable in terms of employment and education, and isolated reserves should prepare Aborigines for closer contact with white society and culture. The ten principles are –

1. Group – or community – life is of fundamental importance to persons of Aboriginal descent.
2. Health and a soundly balanced diet are essential for cultural advance.
3. The maintenance and increase of the aborigines (full-blood and mixed-blood) depend basically on the health of the mothers.
4. The status and dignity of their women should be raised.
5. The status of employment for persons of Aboriginal descent should be the same as for Australians in general.
6. An understanding of the How and Why of the processes of civilization and of Australian life is necessary for progress towards and in citizenship.
7. Effective education must be related to Social and Economic Opportunity.
8. Justice on a democratic basis is essential in all our dealings with aborigines and persons of Aboriginal descent.
9. Security must be provided in the Transition Stages from Aboriginal to European culture, from Nomadism to Citizenship.
10. The spiritual life of the Aborigines should be respected (Elkin 1944:22-39).

Elkin's approach, which was promoted also by the ABM, was a challenge to lethargy and indifference in Aboriginal affairs – to the marginalisation of Aborigines by capitalist colonialism. However, Elkin's sympathy and concern for sensitivity to cultural values

and practices during transition, are coloured by his underlying assumption that ultimately Aborigines must be resocialised to European values and life style, and so be 'civilised'.

> Therefore, until we have helped them to see our problems and understand our purposes and the assumptions and reasons on which we base out activities, we cannot expect them to enter intelligently and with interest into civilized life (Elkin 1944:29).

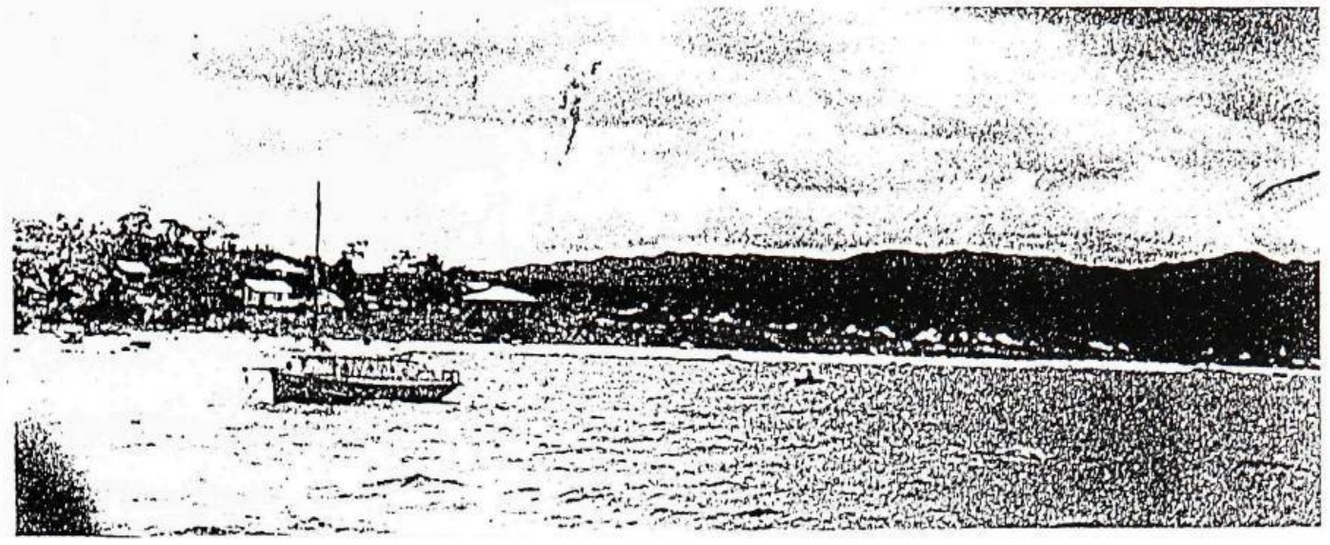
In the following years, the Assimilation policy began to emerge as the way beyond segregation and was endorsed by the Commonwealth and States conference in 1951. As assimilation became official Queensland government policy during the 1950s, it was also embraced by the Anglican Church. Bishop Hudson of Carpentaria Diocese, however, did not see assimilation as total resocialisation or absorption into the Australian community. He outlined his understanding of the policy in 1958:

> Assimilation does not mean absorption; it does not mean an inferior race sufficiently educated to be employable as labourers but never holding positions of responsibility; neither does it necessarily imply inter-marriage with the people of another race. It means ultimate equality of opportunity, of status and responsibility (Hudson 1958c:29).

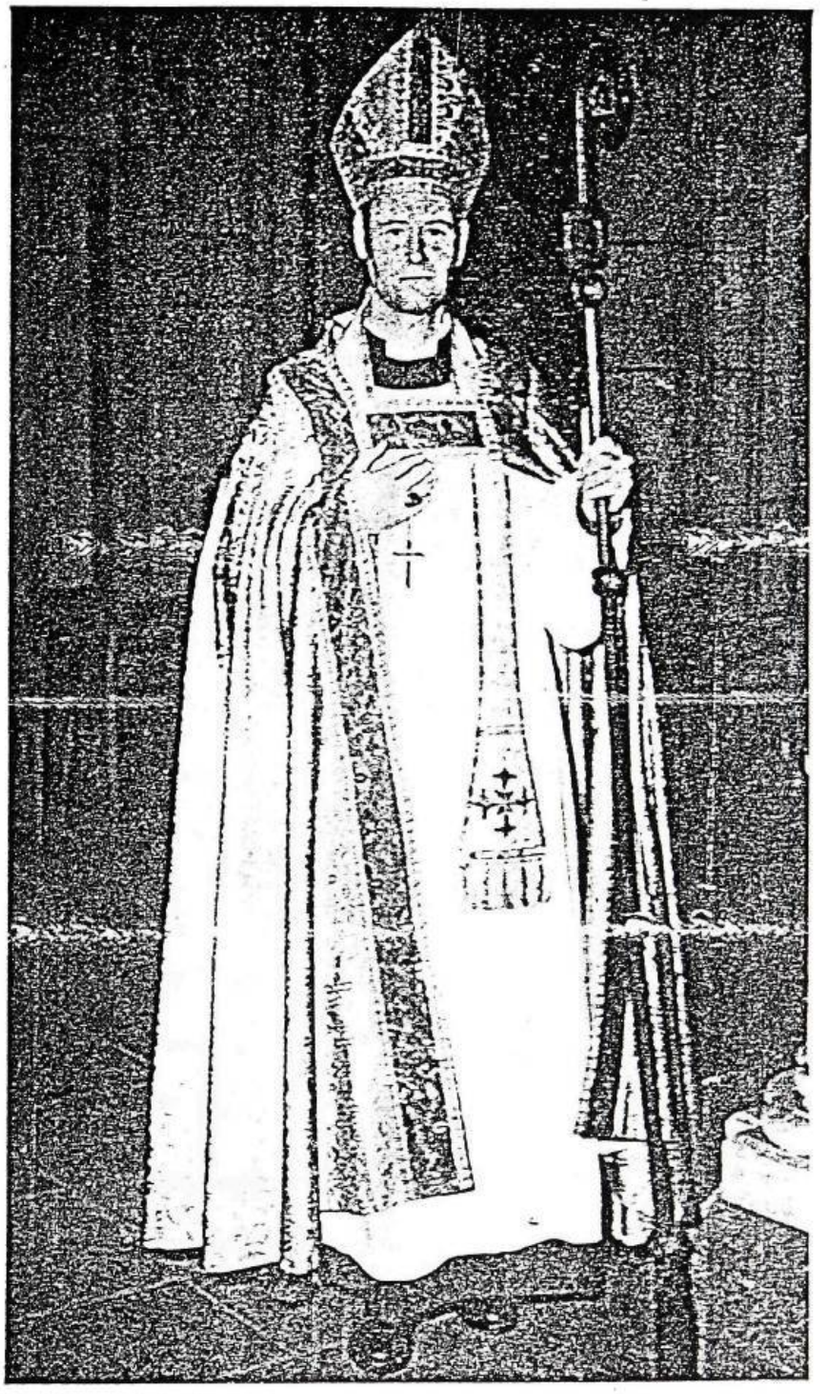
The Bishop noted that the change of Government policy was reflected in a tripling of the grant for the three Anglican Missions in 1952, with increases in succeeding years to £17,900 in 1958. However, in order to implement the necessary advances of developing economic projects, improved education, health and housing, he put forward a request for £34,000 for the following year. Hudson expressed the long-term process in this way:

> The next step must proceed along the lines of the development of Aboriginal Communities where they can be educated to become self-supporting units, retaining such of their own customs and culture as are not incompatible with Christian civilisation and at the same time advancing in education, living standards, economic activity and a sense of personal responsibility. By such means they will in time become capable of meeting the white man on an equal footing and taking their place in the community as citizens of the Australian Commonwealth (Hudson 1958c:31).

To achieve these goals he advocated a gradual process through the continuing supportive and protective sphere of the missions, and by developing local industries such as cattle and trochus shell, working towards self-support. Substantial capital expenditure was



Aborigine village below Iron Range.



Wilfrid John Hudson, after his Consecration, September 21st, 1950

necessary for plant and equipment, as well as schools, teachers and housing. Such was the theory, but in practice the constant theme of economic handicaps persisted:

> "The unfavourable nature of country, the shortage of trained technical staff, and the capital costs involved in establishing industries combined to make the theory difficult of realisation." (Rayner 1962:559)

In the following year, Bishop Hudson viewed assimilation in integrationist terms.

> "True assimilation can only come when members of each race meet and mix as equals: when we cease to think about or even notice particularly the colour of a man's skin. ... until the posts of responsibility can be occupied by the exceptionally gifted brown man as they are now occupied by the highly qualified white man, we shall not have achieved full assimilation" (Hudson 1959b).

Provision of adequate funding and sufficient qualified staff were not realised in the years that followed and it became evident that the task was too enormous and unrealistic for the Church to carry. It may be inferred also that the slowness of the Government in responding to Mission deficits and the increasingly desperate calls for funds at this time, became a means of encouraging the handover of missions to government control. Yarrabah Mission felt these pressures earlier and handed over in 1960, and the three Carpentaria missions in 1967.

4.5. Continuing themes in mission practice

The review of contact pressures in the Lockhart River region from small scale mining and the more intensive sea industries, indicated the disruption to Aboriginal life that began 100 years before the Lockhart River Mission began. The Anglican Church was again too preoccupied in establishing itself in Queensland in the new settlements to want to or be able to give attention to Aborigines in the far north, until the initiatives of John Gribble and Gilbert White at the turn of the century began to press the Church into greater action. The Queensland Government policy of isolation and protection of Aborigines, dating from 1897, followed the pattern set in New South Wales and, together with the Mission or settlement approach, was seen to be the only way to address the Aboriginal situation. The colonial social relations of white control and Aboriginal subservience are evident in the purposeful intentions to both separate Aborigines from

conflict with the expanding white settlement, and also to resocialise them to European social and economic norms. In practice, the policy was inadequately funded, and failed economically to develop self-support through the capitalist mode, and failed socially by making Aborigines inescapably dependent on the support of Government and Church provisions, as Bishop Davies was particularly aware. The Churches established Missions is accord with the views of the Government that isolation and protection were necessary, but also with the intentions on their part to both 'civilise' or resocialise, and also evangelise the Aborigines. The Churches both depended on, and were restrained by Government funding, and also expected freedom to pursue its evangelising aims. In this respect, the Anglican Church at least, was restrained by the vagaries of Church support particularly in difficult economic periods.

This unsatisfactory situation led to attempts to reformulate policy, which swung from increased protective segregation from 1910 to the 1920s, to citizenship and assimilation in the 1950s. Generally, the Anglican Church supported the shift in Government policy towards assimilation as a better resourced way to achieve resocialisation, economically, socially and spiritually. Bishop Hudson, however, realising that the logical end of assimilation was the disappearance of Aborigines through absorption, pointed the way instead to an integrationist interpretation, and advocated maintaining distinctive Aboriginal communities and further efforts to develop self-support in them. Underlying themes of mission that can be seen to persist, then, are the co-joining of resocialising and evangelising, and the separation of the Mission station approach.

5. Establishment of the Lockhart River Mission

The background chapters have shown the consistent marginalisation of surviving Aborigines under the impact of the capitalist mode of the colonial dispossession and expanding settlement, which meant loss of land, and so loss of access to resources for maintaining the Aboriginal mode of production and life-style. Resistance was interpreted as rebellion that had to be either crushed or transformed into an acceptable usefulness to the dominant class through resocialisation. The Aboriginal mode of production and culture were incompatible with this process. This foundation of this process was not always clear to many due to the ideology of the superiority of European culture, which was equated with 'civilisation', and the influence of notions of social evolution on Europeans generally, giving rise to the false notion that Aborigines would inevitably die out because they were not 'fit' to survive. Humanitarian and Christian concern for their plight led a minority in efforts to change attitudes, and to protect and settle Aborigines in village style living.

The penal and secular character of the first settlements mitigated against the Churches' efforts to establish ministry among both settlers and Aborigines. Missionary emphasis of the time was towards uncolonised peoples, and the scope for such mission to non-Europeans was not at first evident in Australia until humanitarian concerns arose. Eventual efforts of missionaries were hindered by the oppression Aborigines suffered from individual Europeans and the by colonial intrusion as a whole, as well as from their own share in the misconceptions that Europeans held concerning Aborigines and their culture. As a result, the economic and social incompatibilities of the colonial process were duplicated in the religious sphere. Except perhaps for the approach of Threlkeld, evangelising and 'civilising' were seen to go hand in hand, and the Christianity portrayed was enculturated with British and European forms and values, and took little positive account of Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and customs. A few individuals like Gilbert White, and later, Elkin had ethnographic appreciation, although from a Eurocentric perspective.

As Missions began to endure in the more isolated regions of the north, the basic resocialising premise of 'evangelise and civilise' continued, and involved Churches and Governments of the time in a close relationship in the implementation of policies of protection, transformation and assimilation. Churches and missionaries were not simply puppets of the State, however, and had their own agenda for holistic resocialisation which was grounded in moral and religious transformation. Missionaries became frustrated not only by cultural resistance and the Church's difficulty in finding and supporting suitable people for missionary roles, but also by Governments either failing to adequately fund their own policies or in practice adopting a passive stance, once Aborigines were out of the way, and expecting the Churches to take responsibility to achieve self-support. Bleakley comments about the early years of Missions in Queensland:

> The Church of course was most interested in the spiritual ministrations to the people. It regarded the material care of them as the Government's responsibility. On the other hand, the Government was quite content to regard it as the prerogative of the religious bodies and limited their help to little more than indigent rations, holding the view that, with the labour available, these institutions should be able to earn or grow most of their own needs. Between these two stools, the Missionaries frequently had a lean time (Bleakley 1961:122-3).

The review of historical approaches to mission showed the development of the close Church/State nexus and the prolonging of its effects, including the theocratic ideals evident in many Missions, after it was undermined in the Enlightenment period. Other approaches to mission, freed from State ties, also impacted on mission in the nineteenth century in evangelical revivals and the pietist movement. The Churches' participation in effecting policies of the Government of the day placed them in the role of agents of the State. This both compromised their religious purpose and also enhanced the power of missionaries in the Mission 'hot house'. Missionaries gained increased ability to effect change by autocratic coercion, as many did, rather than through charismatic impact and legitimated legal-rational processes.

In the examination of the interaction of missionaries and Aborigines during the establishment period of the Lockhart River Mission, it will be shown that the first superintendent began with the exercise of charismatic 'boss' authority, and this led Aborigines to give legitimacy to the legal-rational authority that the Mission developed. Aboriginal people, on the other side of the interaction, accepted the economic and religious premises of the Mission, but resisted wholesale resocialisation, and re-interpreted religious elements alongside traditional beliefs.

During the establishment period of the 1920s and 1930s, the policy of the Queensland Government aimed primarily at the segregation of Aborigines in reserves and missions for maintenance of life, and to raise them from 'low' hunter-gatherer status to 'higher' forms of settled self-support. The White Australia policy enhanced this approach of keeping Aborigines out of the way, but low funding and unrealistic expectations that self-support could be gained quickly, undermined the policy. It was not until the Act of 1939 that the emphasis shifted to more active resocialisation for a greater usefulness to the Australian economy in the longer term. World War 2 delayed this new emphasis until it developed into assimilation policies in the 1950s. The Mission authorities supported Government policy in the early period, although with the added motivation of providing religious and moral foundations for the social and economic transformation. Both Mission ideals and Government expectations were greatly hampered by false expectations of rapid social and economic change, by lack of financial support, and by Aboriginal re-interpretation and resistance. The result was the emergence of underdevelopment, and the associated dependence of Aborigines on Mission structures.

5.1. Pre-establishment period

The Aboriginal people of the Lockhart River region experienced considerable outside contact and disruption before the mission began in 1924. Pre-European contact is likely to have included contact with people of the Torres Straits and adjacent Papua. Common cultural items included outrigger canoes, harpoons and ceremonial drums (Thomson

1933b: 454, 457; 1934b). Coastal groups were seafarers and hunted for turtle and dugong. The Aboriginal groups had initiation ceremonies centred on culture heroes, which Donald Thomson considered to be have affinity with Melanesian practices of the Torres Strait and Papua (Thomson 1933b:513-519; 1934a).

5.1.1. 'Lugger-time'

Asians were attracted by the news of European exploitation of sea and land resources, and soon arrived for a share of the benefits from mining and lugger industries. Chinese were active in the goldfields in the 1870s, and Japanese and others on luggers by the 1880s. The Japanese sailors, in particular, formed working relationships with Aboriginal family groups to gain labour to dive for beche-de-mer and pearl shell. "Cheap labour was bought with alcohol, trade goods, and a continuous supply of flour, sugar, tea and tobacco" (Chase 1981:10). This early period of work on luggers, is known at Lockhart River as 'lugger time' (Chase 1981:11).

The tensions that arose in the competition for resources is illustrated by a letter of complaint to the Home Secretary in 1912, signed by eight Europeans, including one David Thomson, Captain and owner of the ketch *Seabreeze*, which alleged that two Japanese skippers were infringing upon their recruiting of Aboriginal labour and their fishing for beche-de-mer. It transpired that, unknown to the Protector of Aboriginals at Cooktown (Bodman 1912:1), the Inspector and Protector of Aboriginals at Townsville had issued a permit for Mr J C Armstrong of Eyre Street, Townsville to recruit a limited number of Aborigines north of Cooktown as crew for his two ketches *Tieryo* and *Nancy*, which were skippered by Japanese captains, Ushiroda and H. Shiromoto (Sweetman 1912:1-2). Twenty-six Aborigines were recruited. The complainants also alleged that the Japanese made trips to New Caledonia, returning without health clearance, and were "supplying grog ... to obtain their labour" (Evanson et al 1912:1). The Protector could find no evidence for the latter allegation and described the skippers as "both competent and capable men of good character", and also commented:

> It would appear that complaints of this nature are frequently made owing to an antipathy for and jealousy of the Japanese. Whether from a national point of view, it is desirable that Japanese should be in command of such vessels, thereby practically becoming licensed Surveyors of our Coast, I am not prepared to say, but my experience is that where they know the law, they are always ready and willing to abide by it, and often make inquiries about matters for fear of transgressing (Sweetman 1912:2).

Chase defines an essential difference between the close association of Aborigines of the east coast of Cape York Peninsula with Asians, and their association with Europeans – "these Asians were resource raiders rather than colonists intending to settle the north" (Chase 1981:7- 8). He also observed that the Japanese, 'Manillamen', Malays and others, facing European hostility and racism, needed a peaceful and co-operative relationship with Aborigines to maintain their access to the sea resources, cheap labour and women. Consequently, they were known for honouring their agreements to pay and for returning workers to their homes (Chase 1981:13).

5.1.2. 'Giblet-time'

Chase (1980) provides a summary of this early contact with sailors, miners and sandalwood gatherers, from both documented and oral Aboriginal perspectives, and of particular significance, an account of an influential settler, Hugh Giblet, who set up a base camp at Lloyd Bay for gathering sandalwood during the fifteen years immediately prior to the establishment of the Mission in the same location. According to the writer Ion Idriess, he was known as the 'Sandalwood King' (Idriess 1959:24) because of the adventurous way he had established an effective and sympathetic working relationship with local Aborigines, and built up a profitable business. From his base at Orchid Point in Lloyd Bay, he recruited Aboriginal workers for gathering sandalwood during the dry season, protected them from unscrupulous lugger captains, and rewarded them well with food, clothing and cases of liquor for a Christmas party. Idriess recounts a vivid account of such a party with plentiful supplies of food, liquor and cases of women's underwear and stockings, plus the hilarity of trying them on and ensuing fights (Idriess 1959:27-29). The Christmas period was traditional time for Aborigines of the region to gather for dancing and initiation before dispersing to their homelands for the wet season. Giblet's

'Christmas' would have been a secular disruption to traditional ceremonies and lifestyle. On the other hand, Giblet became the focus for a stable control of labour recruitment and consequently his camp became an informal settlement for substantial periods of the year. Not surprisingly, this period is known as 'Giblet time'. Idriess attributed this statement to Giblet:

> The good old abos work for me .... That is, they work when they feel like it – when they are hungry for 'whiteman tucker', for tobacco and tomahawks. When they're not spearing my packhorses, or sneaking about to get a crack at one of my men with a nulla-nulla. But it is their own country, and they've a right to their own way of living. Whether or no, lots of them have been of good service to me and my men. When I give them a Christmas party when the lay-up season come, I give them the best I can get, whether it's tucker or tobacco, blankets or billy-cans, a tomahawk or stockings (Idriess 1959:31; in Chase 1980:107).

Aboriginal oral accounts indicate their acceptance of him because of his capacity to trust them with responsibility, including the operation of his boats in his absence, his tolerance of their ways, knowledge of their language, and personal loyalty (Chase 1980:108-112). Giblet died about 1923, apparently as a result of a nulla-nulla blow to the head, according to Idriess (Idriess 1959:32). Aboriginal oral accounts say it was a woomera blow which broke his jaw during a fight following a drinking party. Refusing to go for medical attention, he died at Port Stewart from infection (Chase 1980:109) and was buried there[4].

Giblet had a hotel and license at Port Stewart about 1900.[5] It is uncertain when Giblet first arrived at Lloyd Bay, but probably in 1908, as the Chief Protector, Richard Howard, first mentions Giblet in his Annual Report for the year 1910 and refers to payment for a large quantity of sandalwood cut between October 1908 and June 1910. He reported that Giblet had erected 'quite a homestead' on Lloyd Island to the north of the bay, and:

> had quite 100 natives working under agreement; and two or three other Europeans, who are also engaged in the same industry, have at least an equal number employed. There are three boats – two cutters of about 15 tons each and ketch of 25 tons – constantly engaged in conveying the wood to one or other of the adjacent ports, from whence it is shipped oversea. . . Each of the cutters is in charge of an aboriginal as skipper with an aboriginal crew (Howard 1910:5).

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4 Information given by Bruce Rigsby, January 1995.

5 Information given by Bruce Rigsby, 1993.

It is not clear whether the other Europeans were associates of Giblet or not. They may represent the initial phase of gathering the readily available sandalwood. Giblet evidently then became the main figure for gathering further inland, and the camping place at Orchid Point on the southern side of the bay became his main operating station on behalf of Morey, who held the lease (Done 1987:68). There are references to Giblet's Landing by a group prospecting for gold in 1910 (Dick 1910:600) and by J T Embley, 8 kilometres in from the Lockhart River mouth, in 1913 (Jack 1922:645).

In his report of 1910, Howard is disappointed that his previous recommendation of 1906, that an Aboriginal settlement be established at Lloyd Bay was not taken up. In his 1907 report, he wrote glowingly of his July visit to Lloyd Bay.

> At Orchid Point, which is situated on the south side of the bay, a fairly large camp of natives was found. These are a fine stamp of people – strong, healthy, active fellows – and seemed delighted at the idea of a settlement being formed in their own country. The whole district abounds with game of every description, the natives each day capturing a canoe-load of fish in the space of an hour or so; in fact, from the appearance of the natives, it is self-evident that there is no scarcity of food (Howard 1907:4).

Their well-being might have suggested that a settlement was not necessary, but he saw its value in that "the natives would come in from many miles, both to the north and south of the bay, and it would prove a convenient place to which natives being deported for misdeeds could be sent" (Howard 1907:4). In other words, a settlement would meet the current policy to segregate, protect and settle the Aborigines. In the 1910 report, he made no mention of liquor or recruitment problems, but argued that the sandalwood prices were falling and the timber being depleted rapidly, and contradicted his idyllic view of 1907 on plentiful natural resources: "... and I fear, when the present employment ceases, the natives, having been used to plenty of good food and clothes, will keenly feel the hardship of having again to return to their primitive state of existence, and will probably be worse off than heretofore" (Howard 1910:6). In 1911, Howard arrived to find most Aborigines out cutting sandalwood. He again noted Giblet's dwelling on Lloyd Island and began to point to adversities to justify the establishment of a settlement.

He also stated that approval had been given for a settlement at Pascoe River, to the north of Lloyd Bay, and an area of land had been set aside.

> The remote position of Lloyd Bay and its distance from Coen, the nearest police station, makes the question of patrol a difficult one. Under these conditions I fear a good deal of illegal employment of aborigines is carried on, and until a settlement has been established and an officer appointed to control these matters, little or no improvement in this respect can be expected (Howard 1911).

In the 1912 report, the Chief Protector found only 25 of 350 Aborigines in the locality employed by Giblet, and he pointed to problems of the supply of intoxicating liquor by visiting fishing crews and the lack of patrol visits. He was now more pressing about a settlement.

> I would again impress upon the Government the urgent necessity of at once placing an officer of this Department at the Pascoe or Claudie River to see that the provisions of the Aboriginals Protection Act are not evaded. A good site for a settlement could be selected either on the Claudie River, about five miles from the sea beach, or at a place known as "Kalloway" on the Pascoe River. I would recommend the Claudie river site, as there is good shelter in all weathers for boats; whereas at Kalloway the anchorage, although sheltered from the south-east, is open to east and north-west. At both places there are patches of good land and plenty of fresh water (Howard 1912).

Howard saw Giblet's gathering of Aboriginal people at Lloyd Bay to have value in its stability, but problematic in its unaccountability, its lack of viability in the longer term, and the lack of control and direction on the part of the Government. Giblet had 'charismatic' impact, in Weber's terms, and, while not negating traditional authority, mediated between it and disruptions from outsiders. While Giblet's presence and life-style contributed to cultural change, his accepting approach to the Aborigines and his control of recruiting practices prevented more serious cultural change and social disturbance, and brought a relative stability to their lives at this time, to a large extent on their own terms:

> The most significant effect of Giblet's stay was the reorganization of Aboriginal settlement patterns and subsistence strategies from Temple Bay to Cape Sidmouth. . . . Giblet's presence congregated groups for lengthy periods at Lloyd Bay (particularly those from the Pascoe, Lloyd Bay and Night Island areas). The start of the dry season in June saw groups coming in from the surrounding areas to Orchid Point to start work with the boats and horse teams. After the Christmas celebrations and payments, people then moved back to their own areas for the duration of the wet season (Chase 1980:110).

Anderson's analysis of Kuku Yalanji mode of production and the incorporation of individual Europeans as 'bosses' is relevant to consideration of the status of Hugh Giblet. Anderson notes the importance of achieved status in Aboriginal society in distinction to status ascribed on the basis of sex, age, or kinship. He refers to other researchers, Thomson, Sharp, Chase, Sutton, and von Sturmer, who use terms such as 'big men' or 'bosses' to refer to focal individuals for "households, larger residential groupings and regional entities" (Anderson 1986:3). Anderson calls the groups which identified around focal individuals rather than through common descent, 'camps' or 'mobs', and the focal individuals around which they crystallised, 'bosses' (Anderson 1984:4-5). In his study of tin miners in the Bloomfield region in the 1880s, he notes that the camps that survived were those that were able to form a reciprocal relationship with a miner as 'boss'. Through occasional labour for him they were able to maintain their access to their country and its resources (Anderson 1983).

The Lockhart River groups were able to form a similar boss-relationship with Giblet. Through their labour for him they had in return, protection, access to new goods, and, most importantly, an improved ability to maintain important elements of their traditional life-style, while at the same time interacting with the world of change impacting upon them. This symbiosis contrasts with the social relations of Mission life in which the missionaries, with whom they also formed boss-relationships, expected a significant degree of cultural change, structured on settled village life. Aboriginal oral accounts say that Giblet repelled an early attempt to establish a Mission in the region (Chase 1980:109) and in fact it was only after his death in 1923 that the Anglican Mission began.

5.1.3. Investigations for a Mission

A different view of Giblet is given in the diary of the Rev. John Done, in an account of his first trip in 1921 to investigate establishing a Mission (Done's papers were compiled by his daughter and published in 1987). Done met Giblet at Lloyd Bay in 1921 and in his diary referred to him as "uncrowned king" (Done 1987:67). In his later years he

referred to him as "a whiteman there of bad character" (Done 1966:4). His diary reported that Giblet "supplied us with a good deal of information; which of course may or may not be accurate", including numbers of people in the Reserve, numbers of VD cases and problems with the Japanese. He described the Government reserve being "from Lloyd Bay to Cape Grenville, number of people about two hundred, including Pascoe, Lockhart, Morton, Grenville and other tribes to the north. These tribes have much in common and are friendly" (Done 1987:67). In the same section he referred to one person known as "Flathead" who evidently gave Giblet trouble as "a kind of union agitator".

Giblet also condemned the Japanese as suppliers of grog and for tampering with the women, "the men lending their women when under the influence of drink and hard up for tobacco" (Done 1987:67). Done's scepticism and opinion of his life-style is revealed in his concluding comment, "But Giblet was one of the worst offenders himself. He was agent for Morey's, used grog for himself and natives and kept a harem, this we found out later" (Done 1987:68). It is evident that illegal recruitment, use and abuse of alcohol and Aboriginal women, were common features of this relatively unregulated sea frontier, and accusations of such were a feature of mutual rivalries. Interestingly, old men of the 1970's ranked the Japanese "highest in their scale of respect" (Chase 1981:11).

The planned location for a Mission at that time was further north at the Pascoe River, and Giblet advised Done's party on soil and accessibility at the Pascoe. This location may not have posed a great threat to Giblet. Done's report led to Bishop Newton approaching the Government by letter on 27 May 1921 for assistance in establishing a Mission on the Pascoe River reserve. The Chief Protector of Aboriginals (now John Bleakley) replied positively, indicating that the process had begun through provision being made in the Estimates, and requested "full information as to the extent and nature of the proposed operations, the expense involved in establishment and maintenance and number of natives to be benefited" (Bleakley 1921). The Bishop also approached ABM for

assistance but the Secretary replied that this was not possible in the current year (Linton 1921).

The detailed submission indicates that a typical Mission station approach was envisaged, with a lay superintendent and a priest, aiming to settle the people in villages for them to adopt gardening habits with the help of Torres Strait Islanders, and the provision of a school, store, medical facility, sailing vessel, fencing and a few cattle for milk. Aboriginal labour was to be used for all construction in return for tobacco and rations. The total establishment budget was £2595 and annual maintenance estimated at £1050. The Chief Protector proposed an establishment subsidy of £1000 and an annual subsidy of £500, the same as that provided to the east coast missions (Bleakley 1922:3).

Bishop Newton resigned to go to New Guinea in 1922, and the matter was left to be taken up by Bishop Stephen Davies in 1923. He advised the ABM of the Government's offer and asked the Board to contribute £500 a year. Events began to move quickly in February 1924. On February 8, Needham, the Chairman of the Board, promised the requested subsidy (ABM 1924:135; Davies 1922-9: Feb 8, 1924) Also in February, the Bishop met with Government officials in Brisbane and discussed the granting of mining leases in the region. The Bishop "wanted to be sure that if any mining rights were granted the aborigines themselves would be eligible for such leases" (Bayton 1965:154). As there was no assurance of this and the reserve area was on a mineral belt, Bishop Davies requested a change of site. The government then agreed to transfer the Reserve to the Lockhart River region where there were no leases (Bayton 1965:153-4; Davies 1922-9: Feb 4, 16,19, 1924). The Bishop attempted to buy Morey's lease for £85 but without success (Davies 1922-9: Mar 19, July 30, 1924). Bishop Davies interviewed Harry Redmond Rowan in February (Davies 1922-9: Feb 6, 21, 1924), and his licence as Lay Missionary and Superintendent was registered on May 15, 1924 (Bayton 1965:154).

5.2. *'Rowan time'*

When John Done arrived with Harry Rowan to establish the Mission on July 13, 1924 at the 'Waterhole' (Orchid Point) in Lloyd Bay, adjacent to Giblet's old camp, he found a strong sense of identity among the Aborigines. He recorded:

> Among thirty or forty that we saw, were two kings, King Fred of Lloyd Bay and King Charlie of Ash River and Night Island. These sporting their brass plates, were careful to explain, 'all this country belong to us'. They regarded themselves as no small fry either, as Fred said, 'I king belong this place, I got business, I learn them young fellow dance' (Done 1987:73-4).

The brass plates were given by European officials with expectations of finding a chiefly social order, and keen to identity key individuals with whom they could establish colonial relations. The Aboriginal focal individuals were asserting their 'kingship' according to their understanding of it, which meant their smaller-scale leadership for their clans in ritual and its association with the land. Chase makes the interesting suggestion that the multi-ethnic contact of the early period actually helped to define and strengthen local Aboriginal identity (Chase 1981:18), although some adaptations in life-style had taken place. As already noted, Asians followed closely behind the European sailors and settlers, eager to exploit the sea resources of the eastern coast of Cape York Peninsula. Such cross-cultural experience helped to make ethnic boundaries distinctive, with the effect of reaffirming Aboriginal identity, despite the incorporating of attractive new ways such as foods or dance forms. This is contrary to the common view, as Barth notes, that isolation preserves culture, and interaction reduces it – "cultural differences can persist despite inter-ethnic contact and interdependence" (Barth 1969:10). Regarding the Lockhart River experience, Chase notes, "In this area Asians have played their part in building up Aboriginal defences against modern assaults, by Europeans, upon a distinctive and localised identity" (Chase 1981:18). It can be argued, then, that these Aborigines were well capable of interacting with Europeans to their own benefit, while retaining a clear identity of their own and also resisting (actively and passively), or modifying, particular forms of resocialisation.

Bishop Davies purchased a lugger for the new mission and renamed it Kapuia, which means 'good word' (i.e. gospel) in western Torres Strait language. A Yam Islander, Kebisu, was placed in charge, with crew of two Torres Strait Islanders and a couple of others from the east coast. Done and Rowan left Thursday Island on July 7, 1924, with two vessels, Herald and Kapuia, laden with timber for Rowan's house, plus stores. They arrived at Orchid Point on July 13th at 12.45pm, and spent a few days exploring inland up the Lockhart River with an eye for any land suitable for cultivation. They then cleared a site east of Morey's lease and commenced building a house for Rowan on July 17th, using bush timber and corrugated iron, and the assistance of the ten crew and a few others. Rowan moved in on July 26th (without windows and doors fitted), and a small well was sunk to produce good water (Done 1924:50-4; 1987:69-71).

The Mission began from where Giblet left off, at least in the sense of being a European presence of protection and mediation to the European world, and this seems to have been accepted by those who came in, at least for the protection and access to European goods. "One old man knew the mission boat (ie. *Herald*) and said they were looking long time for mission" (Done 1987:69). However, a markedly different emphasis to that of Giblet quickly emerged, for Done's diary also records that the building of the Superintendent's house included time for prayer and a religious talk each night. The talks included, God is my Friend, God the Father, God our big brother, The Sower, God our light, God the way, God our helper. The Torres Strait crew taught them the hymn, "There is a green hill". On the fourth day of building Rowan's house (which took ten days), the Aborigines shifted their camp to the east (Done 1987:70-1). The latter note in Done's diary is significant in that it indicates that the Aborigines felt it necessary to maintain their social boundary and identity in the Mission environment, and is a sign of the distinct difference between the boss-relationship of Rowan and that of Giblet who had closer cohabitation.

The Herald sailed for Thursday Island on July 28th, leaving Harry Rowan in residence. The Mission began with 29 adults and 6 children and with the expectation that at least

500 would come under its influence. It was not the intention of the Mission to provide food, but to develop settled self-support. "We hope to encourage the people to make gardens, and work on the reefs for trochas shell, beche-de-mer, and turtle shell, in return for which they will receive such things as they require" (Done 1924:54). The resocialising pattern was set from the beginning. The agreement with the Government provided that the Superintendent (also Local Protector) would control all recruiting for the fishing industries, and the Missions would be as self-sufficient as possible through free transport of goods in the Mission vessel and by using Aboriginal labour (Bleakley 1922:3; Aboriginal Dept. 1924:1096).

In the following January, Rowan reported numbers of over eighty, with others still arriving from north, south and west. The number of children was small and he attributed this to a high infant mortality over the previous ten years. By this time, he had identified a more suitable, permanent location for the mission at Bare Hill, just south of Cape Direction. Rowan considered the initial reaction to the new regime and emphasis to be positive:

> The system under which this Mission has been opened is that the natives must maintain themselves and their children; food may be procured by them from the store on one day a week but only in return for produce of some sort. This is working very satisfactorily and seems to be popular amongst the natives. A large number have offered themselves for Holy Baptism; these are now under preparation (Rowan 1925:84).

Not everything was straightforward about this beginning, as later he commented about the beginning of the school, religious instruction and medical clinic: "Of course these had very small beginnings, as language and suspicion hindered the work" (Rowan 1928a:191-2). This comment suggests that there was a short period of weighing up both Rowan and his expectations, and the degree to which accommodations could be made and expectations met, in return for the protection and provision of his 'boss-ship'. The acceptance of both reciprocal arrangements for work, and also baptism, reflects prior experience of industry for Giblet and lugger captains, contact with the rapidly developing Church of the Torres Strait Islanders and its rituals, and a readiness to accept the basic

expectations of the mission relationship at this time. Prior relationships of mutual benefit had prepared them with an openness for this more substantial relationship.

In such a situation of mutual benefit, it was difficult both then, and now in hindsight, to be able to gauge the degree of genuine acceptance of the new faith and the degree of nominal acceptance, and the shifts between these responses over time. The impact of Islander Christianity, however, cannot be underestimated, as discussed later. Rowan's time for preparation of the candidates would have aimed to both teach them and to discern their genuineness. Rowan, at this time, was exercising a charismatic leadership, avoiding coercion, overcoming hesitancies, but laying down clear expectations of a new order, and developing a legal-rational framework, while the people clearly were open to giving him legitimacy through their responses.

Bishop Davies visited the Mission for 24 days late in September 1924, during which he led church services and examined the country (Davies 1922-9: Sept 26-Oct 20,1924). He reported that the men were collecting sufficient marine produce to return up to 10 shillings worth of stores each Saturday. He and Rowan saw this as work for the 'able-bodied men', and discouraged the women from diving for beche-de-mer and trochus, to their disappointment. They were happy, however, about the women's hopes to form groups for cotton-growing. Done notes that Davies "was a difficult man. He was autocratic and self-willed" (Done 1966:2). The Bishop also reported a good response to the new expectations, although with his own interpretations:

> In the spiritual life there were already some who wished to come under instruction for Holy Baptism; these had already renounced old customs that they knew would not be acceptable if they became Christian, such as a multitude of wives. Other signs of change were noticeable; the women certainly realised that the mission had come to release them from serfdom (Davies 1925).

5.2.1. Holistic aims

In contrast to Giblet's pragmatic relationship with the Aborigines, the missionaries had idealistic aims to transform their lives with a combination of the Christian faith and

economic self-sufficiency, and so raise them to a new standard of Christian living. Done expressed it this way:

> The Church of England has, with Government assistance, commenced a mission in the vicinity of the Lockhart River and, while teaching the blacks there the elements of religion, will endeavour to instil into them the principle of self help and, side by side with higher things, will teach them the rudiments of that industry which will enable them to earn their living, and take their place in the economy of things to which they surely have a right (Done 1987:73).

The Carpentarian of October 1930 stated the Mission's ideal more plainly as:

> getting the wandering tribes settled under happy conditions, to encourage them to be self-productive with their own bit of land and their home .... to help him fulfil a part in the development of the country which was his before it became ours. (Diocese of Carpentaria 1930:283)

The colonial view of Aborigines is quite apparent. They were of no use, and a hindrance to progress, as 'wandering tribes'. They had to be transformed and elevated from primitive hunters and gatherers to settlers who made good use of the land and were of benefit to the economy, according to European ideals and the capitalist mode. Bishop Davies expressed these views a decade later:

> There are still whole tribes left who live on their tribal areas, primitive, but not degraded, and with a high degree of intelligence, but still food-gatherers. As food-gatherers these people are not making the best use of the land on which they live; the same areas developed first by the pastoral industry and later by agriculture, would maintain far larger populations (Davies 1935:31).

The actual experience of Mission life soon revealed, then, that redemption for the Aborigines was not merely a spiritual matter, but also meant the discovering of new ways to survive by way of the capitalist mode of production. This shift had been made to some extent through previous employment on luggers and in gathering sandalwood for Giblet. Early reports also reveal moral attitudes in the desire that abuses of grog and prostitution, as well as infant mortality, had to be overcome in the new order of the Mission. Done concludes:

> As has been so frequently proved in other places, these people can be taught, can be made useful to themselves and the country, can be led into a higher life instead of one of degradation and exploitation. Let us hope then, that the day is not far distant when these, the original owners of the land, will come into their full rights (Done 1987:74; see also Bleakley 1961:121-2).

'Full rights' here is somewhat ambiguous, but is clearly related to the expected outcome of the Mission program of teaching and disciplining them in a way of life religiously and

economically acceptable or 'civilised'. The Aborigines' spiritual relationship with the land was not taken into account. In referring to 'other places', Done most likely had in mind Yarrabah, near Cairns, under the strong hand of Gribble, and the Torres Strait Mission to the north, although the latter was a very different situation where Melanesian Islanders already had a settled land and sea economy, and a different leadership structure. It is significant that the Mission staff from the early days included people from Yarrabah and the Torres Strait, for they were seen as good ambassadors of the next stage of development envisaged for the people of Lockhart River. Nomadic or 'wandering' activities were discouraged, except for outside employment or during times of financial hardship in the Mission, and the evolutionary ideas of social progress from primitive nomadic society to settled agricultural society to industrial modern or civilised society, were implicit in the mission station approach among Aborigines (cf. Chase 1970:5-6).

The desire to cultivate land in this process of resocialisation, led to the early relocation of the Mission, first to Cutha Creek[6] and then to Bare Hill. This site was significant as it marked the boundary between the northern and southern language groups. Twelve months later the population had increased to 120 with a few cases of tuberculosis and with 20 children in school. A work day was now introduced:

> On this day every able-bodied person who is not out fishing gives his work to the Mission to enable work necessary to the whole community to be done such as building the school or clearing scrub for gardens. On other days, when owing to rough weather no fishing can be done, work is found for those who want it on shore and paid for by the Mission at a fixed rate per hour. Saturday morning is pay day, and the people may buy in the store for cash anything they want in addition to their fixed ration (Diocese of Carpentaria 1925:109-110).

This report indicates a shift from the original intention to avoid handout dependency, and from a barter economy, to a partial cash economy through such employment. The children were now provided with two meals a day, and the elderly given a small ration. There is evident here a significant development of institutionalisation in the Mission. A building program had been embarked upon using the services of a Torres Strait man and a Yarrabah man (probably lay missionary Michael Conrad [Conrad Madigan]). The need

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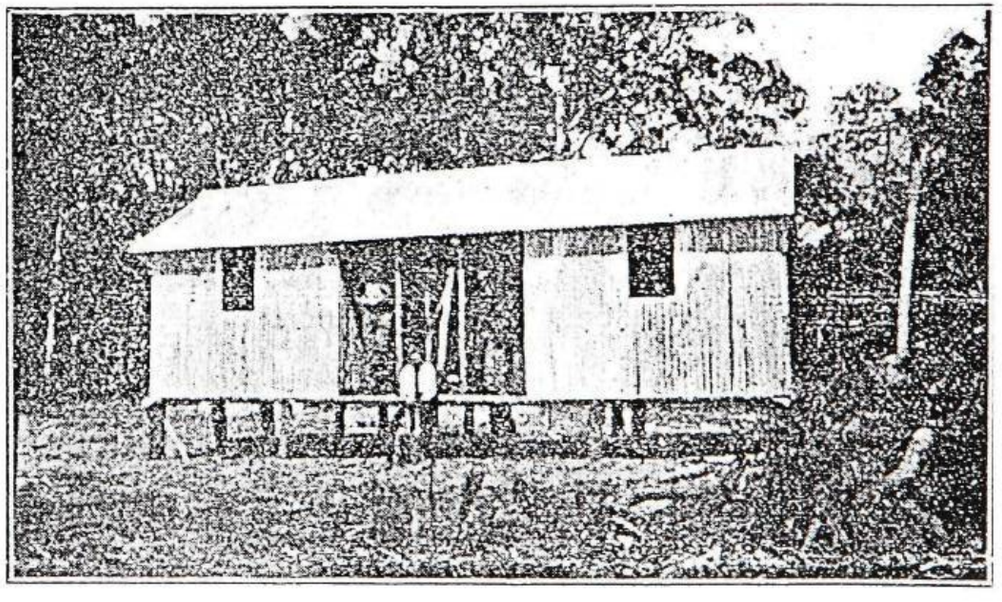
6 Variously spelt as Cutha, Coutha Cutta or Cutter; derived from Kuuku Ya'u : *katha* 'bad smell'.

KING CHARLIE
of
Ash River and
Night Island

KING FRED
of
Lloyd Bay

Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Rowan.



ROWAN'S HOUSE

for an assistant for Rowan was now being canvassed. An unwillingness in the men to sign on for work on fishing luggers that year suggests both an acceptance of mission conditions for their benefits, and also that conditions and returns from the luggers were poor. The report comments that better inducements will have to be offered to gain their labour (Diocese of Carpentaria 1925:110).

All this development meant that Rowan became taxed with the material side of Mission life and felt the lack of supporting staff, particularly a priest, as originally intended, to develop the spiritual foundations of Mission life. The tension between the 'Devotional' side of religious belief and ritual, and the 'Affirmative' side of practical action in society, is evident here. Rowan had attempted to hold both together, but economic and the practicalities of developing the Mission kept him well occupied, and this would have reduced the impact of pressure for religious change. Despite Rowans' holistic outlook, his writing show him as a practical man with a touch of humour, and able to rough it. He wrote to Donald Thomson, the anthropologist, about a delay in getting him from Port Stewart to the Mission. "There is what used to be a whale boat on the place but, she is now a submarine and a dinghy would be drier, the only two horses are also away with a chap the other side of the Lockhart, so even that crumb is no available" (Rowan 1930-2).

5.2.2. Islander mission

Meanwhile, in the Torres Straits, two Islanders were ordained priests on October 18, 1925 – Joseph Lui and Poey Passi, the latter being appointed as Chaplain to Lockhart River Mission, and the former temporarily to Mitchell River Mission (ABM Review Nov 12, 1925:135; Macfarlane 1926:186). So began the intermittent pattern of Torres Strait Islander priests ministering to Aboriginal people, often filling gaps when white priests or funds were not available. Passi was followed by the Revd Arthur Flint from August 1927 to November 1928, and then, after a gap, another Islander, the Revd Sailor Gabey, followed from September 1931 to 1933. As with Poey Passi, this was straight after his ordination on 20 September. After two years he too was withdrawn because of lack of funds, even though he received only £60 a year (Davies 1933:484). From the beginning

of the Mission, Islanders such as Kebisu were brought in as staff and served as examples of the changed life-style desired of the Aborigines. They worked as boat crew, in building and gardening. In addition, Mick Conrad, a mixed-descent man from Yarrabah, helped in cooking for the children.[7] The cultural differences, and the Islanders' sense of superiority, ultimately came to the fore to limit their role. Macfarlane reported, "they themselves pointed out to the islanders how a new link was being forged in the chain of missionary development by the fact that they were being sent to the mainland aboriginal mission stations as chaplains" (Macfarlane 1926:186). The original link of the chain was mission from Pacific Islanders brought to the Torres Strait by missionaries of the London Missionary Society.

Some attention is needed here to the style and character of the Christianity established in the Torres Strait under Pacific Island influence, and developed further through Anglican ritual, and then its influence at Lockhart River Mission. The motivation of those who responded and willingly embraced Missions is a related interest. The experienced LMS missionaries, Macfarlane and Murray, arrived at Darnley Island on 1 July, 1871, with eight Polynesian evangelists and their wives (Bayton 1965:45), as they followed the successful missionary method of John Williams, the LMS pioneer missionary in the Society Islands. "He was the first to see clearly that evangelization of the Pacific could be carried out only by Christians of the native races; hence his policy of placing native teachers, often with the slenderest of qualifications, on remote islands where they could hardly ever be visited by any missionary" (Neill 1964:298). Results were not speedy, but the limited European presence meant that the Christian society that emerged was strongly influenced by South Sea Islander ways and leadership. "It seems likely that the Islanders initially viewed the mission as simply the latest in the series of cults that came to them from time to time, albeit one that promised unprecedented power and wealth" (Beckett 1987:40). The social disruption of European incursion, however, meant an unsettling of religious foundations to cultural life, and Haddon's comment of 1917 is also relevant:

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7 Conversation with Jimmy Doctor at Lockhart River, February 1989.

> An awakening of religious activity is a frequent characteristic of periods of social unrest. The weakening or disruption of the old social order may stimulate new and often bizarre ideals, and these may give rise to religious movements that strive to sanction social and political aspirations (Chinnery & Haddon 1917, in Burridge 1969:3).

Beckett describes the origin of 'island custom' in this way:

> According to the old myths, their ancestors subjected the fetishes brought in from other places to a process of 'domestication', integrating them into the local structures without denying their exotic origins. In the same way, latter day Islanders domesticated not only the songs and dances they adopted from the South Sea people, but also the diving boats, the church and government, weaving them about with customary practices and organizing them along customary lines (Beckett 1987:6-7).

This 'island custom' included somewhat narrow moral and religious controls, strong local lay leadership and guided endorsement of secular leaders (Beckett 1987:42), and, after handover of the Mission to Anglican control, the more visual ritualised structure of the Anglican catholic tradition. Under the Anglicans, local LMS elders became Churchwardens and retained significant leadership, while the greater ritual of the set forms of Morning and Evening Prayer, the priestly rituals of the service of Holy Communion, and the practice of kneeling, were immediately introduced (Done 1987:1-8). Macfarlane acknowledges:

> I was responsible for the July 1st. celebrations, which we began at Darnley Is in 1921, when we erected a memorial cross on the little headland above the church. ... We introduced the native drums into the church to accompany the singing, particularly on the festivals: but perhaps it was as well that they hadn't native bagpipes! Incense found its way into the Strait by way of All Saints' Darnley, too, and the first altar lights ... but as there were then no lights on the Cathedral altar Bishop Newton asked whether they could be placed there instead, so that the Cathedral could lead the way, as was right. And so it was done, and soon after one of the Darnley people carved a very nice pair of wooden candlesticks of 'wongai' inlaid with mother-o'-pearl, as well as a cross. Where possible I was anxious that the people make use of their own arts and crafts in the church .. (Macfarlane 1963).

Such was the ethos of mission carried to Lockhart River Mission by the Rev Poey Passi and lay Islander Mission workers. Several reports refer to the interest of individuals from Lockhart River in a having a Mission established (Cook 1933:102; Done 1987:69, 73). Some had already experienced the impact of mission in the Torres Strait during their time on luggers. The early interest in baptism suggests a genuine following of the charismatic leadership of these Islanders and Rowan in the early years. Aborigines also held a unified view of the sacred and secular, and, in a cult sense, may have embraced the

new religion as belonging to the benefits of settlement, without necessarily abandoning traditional values. A common saying at Lockhart River in the 1970s, 'Bora is like Church' (Thompson 1984), indicates their capacity to understand their comparable functions and to hold the two religious traditions in parallel. In other words, there was a process of incorporating new cultural elements arising from charismatic input, alongside, rather than in place of, practices and customary values under traditional authority.

5.2.3. Baptisms

Entry to the Church was through a program of teaching and then baptism. Infants of baptised adults were also baptised. In 1927, Rowan commented: "The work of evangelisation is necessarily slow; it would be easy to show big lists of baptisms, but soundness and depth are being aimed at" (ABM Review June 15, 1928:53). Night literacy classes for adults were held at this time. The first baptism of 29 adults took place in 1930. In 1932 the total was 91, in 1936 the 260 baptised included 90 confirmed, and by 1945 almost all residents were baptised. With the Islander influence, Lockhart River Church grew to have many of the characteristics of the Torres Strait Church – Anglo-Catholic monastic tradition with daily services, use of drums in worship, language hymns, associated secular dances in Islander style, dress styles (lavalavas) and craft activities. Indigenous leadership was fostered in the Church through the appointment of churchwardens and councillors. Islander-style singing and dancing became a particular feature of Christmas and New Year celebrations, to the detriment of traditional forms. They were seen by missionaries as an acceptable and attractive secular adjunct for the Christian religious celebrations. They also provided the opportunity for many Aborigines to participate enthusiastically, while being less committed to the religious associations.

> The native dance on Christmas night was most spectacular; the dusky forms and faces surmounted with white headdresses coming out of the darkness, which was only partly dispelled by the oil lamps which stood on the ground at either side of the group. The three tribes (Night Island, Claremont and Pascoe) each gave a selection of dances and songs. These were repeated on New Year's day in daylight (Diocese of Carpentaria 1938a:48).

Like the Islanders (Beckett 1987:40), the Aborigines may have allowed some cultural forms to decline, and abrogated particular practices, as they did when giving up sorcery items, but later realised their loss, and, either subversively or defiantly, held traditional dances and Bora ceremonies, and maintained cultural values. In 1931 the practice of sorcery was discussed with some old people preparing for baptism and "they came forward with various objects, each with its own superstitious settings, they showed a lively anxiety to put away old beliefs, and at the same time to readjust the intricate relationship laws (which had been a real stumbling block to their spiritual progress)" (Year Book DOC 1932-3:41). Rowan endeavoured to use a rational, negotiated approach as part of his aim to ensure genuineness and legitimation of the Christian basis of the Mission authority. Enthusiasm for Islander music and dance would have masked retention of traditional values. Then followed a high period in which Rowan reported, "I must admit I have been surprised at incidents showing how whole-heartedly some at least have taken on the new life, and are holding fast" (Rowan 1933b:38). However, cultural attitudes remained below the surface. In his monthly report of December 1937, Rowan included two references to sorcery:

> Health. Two women Mary Anne Debline & Nellie Diver, I can find nothing wrong with them, just low condition. They refuse to come to Hospital, it is believed they are Pourri Pourried.
>
> Conduct of inmates. A case of intended murder by witch-craft, confessed to by the parties. The victim died, and other complications came to light. I have submitted the case to the Protector in Thursday Island (Rowan 1937e:1).

Something of Rowan's personal style is revealed in a comments from Ivy Ropeyarn in 1993 that Rowan 'tied up calico' (wore a lavalava) to go to church. Mrs Ropeyarn came to the Mission from the Nesbit River as a school child in about 1936, after her father had been brought in by police with others from the Pascoe and Wenlock regions, and Coen. They came by canoe and camped in tents. Rowan sent him back to bring his family in also. He made a canoe with a sail and outrigger and they sailed in. The Mission had separate Clarmont, Wenlock and Pascoe 'villages' for people from different regions.[8]

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8 Conversation with Ivy Ropeyarn at Lockhart River, April 24, 1993.

5.2.4. Mission staff

Finding suitable staff was a problem from the beginning. On January 10, 1925, Bishop Davies appointed Rowley Kingston James as an honorary Lay Missionary, but noted in his diary that he 'ran away' after only a short time. Other appointments were the Pacific Islander, Tom Savage (March 23, 1925), Michael Conrad from Yarrabah, July 17, 1925 (initially as teacher), and Mr R C (Charles) Cook, Agriculturalist and Medical Aid, February 14, 1927. Rev A C Flint offered his services for Lockhart on March 18, 1927 (he was to replace Poey Passi). Before arriving in August 1927, he married Margaret Howard, a missionary at Yarrabah who had previously served in New Guinea. Mick and Norma Conrad then returned to Yarrabah due to the financial strain of additional white staff (ABM Review, Nov 12 & Dec 12, 1927, June 12, 1928).

Kitty Savage was appointed teacher on December 14, 1929 (ABM Review, July 1928: 1; Davies 1922-9). She had a practical upbringing by a foster couple, the wife being a part-Islander. Oral accounts recorded by Sharp portray her as an independent and strong-minded person, and say that her mother was educated in Brisbane and her father was a Polynesian medicine man who taught her skills to take with her to Lockhart River. Sharp reports a Lockhart man saying that Kitty respected Bora initiation activity (Sharp 1993:134-7). Her six months appointment was extended for some years, and her work highly commended by Rowan in 1931 (Rowan 1931:86). This suggests that she was a significant *individual* in Burridge's terms, who effectively bridged cultural boundaries, both in supporting the educational aims of the Mission with the children, and by her example of an industrious self-contained person, capable in gardening, fishing, handcrafts and sewing, as well as in the personal, supporting relationships she had with Aboriginal people (ABM Review–Report, June 12, 1928: 53).

> In the year I spent with her the thing she liked was her tea in bed. So that was the only luxury she had. By this time there'd be one person, at least one, waiting outside to see her about a problem. It could be any problem, *anything*, even to a dream that might have had him worried (Sis in Sharp 1993:136).

Kitty Savage resigned in 1937 as she did not wish to be placed under the newly appointed Chaplain, who was also to be in charge of the school (Rowan 1937e:1). This was to be the Rev W H Nicholls who arrived on December 2, 1937. He was a trained teacher, and had been the Rector of Redcliffe in Brisbane (Diocese of Carpentaria 1938a:48). He also acted as Medical Supervisor (Rowan 1938b:1). Another Pacific Islander, Undai Ware, arrived in July 1938 to assist in the school, and Kitty later returned as his wife and became his assistant teacher when Undai was placed in charge (Davies 1947b, 1947c; Protector of Islanders 1946).

5.2.5. Japanese recruitment

Bishop Davies visited Lockhart again in June-July 1925, and expressed concern at Japanese recruitment along the coast. He proclaimed July 1 (the Islanders' 'Coming of the Light' day) as Foundation Day and granted a holiday. In later years St. James Day, July 25, became the main commemorative day, after the name given to the church building. On a subsequent visit in April 1929, the Bishop reported 8 acres of gardens and 30 acres of timber cleared and being planted with cotton. He noted a "very good tone at mission" (Davies 1922-9: April 1, 1929). The matter of Japanese recruitment of men and procurement of women was taken up by the Chief Protector of Aboriginals, following a suggestion by the Superintendent of Cape Bedford Mission (Hopevale), that he and Rowan be appointed to issue permits, Rowan's area to cover the southern boundary of the Mission, Cape Sidmouth, to Port Stewart. This appointment as Inspector of Pearl Shell and Beche-de-mer Fisheries was made on June 7, 1928 but did not appear to be acted on until the same proposal was raised again in 1934 (Bleakley 1928, 1934); Deputy Chief Protector of Aboriginals 1934).

5.2.6. Settling down

Some personal comments from Rowan after Christmas 1925 reveal more of his character and the reality of the mission. They reflect both a sympathetic and a determined character, capable in difficult conditions and able to discipline and encourage. After expressing thanks for gifts, he wrote:

> The Mission is settling down now. At present the people's energy is at a low ebb; the newness is working off, but still the numbers keep going up steadily, for which I am very thankful. This very dry season, with no garden produce, is making it rather a tough problem; still we have had none run away, and lately a few of the bad characters have come in of their own accord. ... I called them bad characters; well, it is only their characters that are worse than others. I generally find that they are no worse that the next, and usually more energetic. I've just got one who has speared two men, and done a spell at Palm Island. He is glad to be on his homeland, and is shaking down well.
>
> The Torres Island native priest has taken over the religious side of the teaching, and also the school children, so that gives me more time to deal with improvements, and it is a great happiness to have our regular services. ...
>
> I wonder that more of the adults [white Australians] cannot see that most of their prosperity has come at the expense of the aborigines, and a very great number have benefited directly by the work done by him, and make up their minds to assist to make a happy, self-respecting race out of the mere handful that is left in the land. It is practically a debt owed by nearly everyone in Australia. I won't deny that the aborigine is lazy, but it is hardly his fault, as there has been inducement until late years for him to be anything else. The industries of the white man only wanted the cheapest labour they could get, and they got it as cheap as they could. God grant we may be able to get them over this stage of indolence, and they will develop into happy Christian beings. With His help it can and will be done (Rowan 1926).

Two years later another report indicates development and continuing optimism.

> What they had learnt [before the mission] was not a higher civilisation, but a knowledge of grog, which was often used as a medium of "shanghaiing" the unfortunate natives, and a small nautical vocabulary - mostly lurid adjectives.
>
> A lugger in search of a crew, often found that the natives bolted before they could reach the shore, so the grog was left on the shore, and the boat's party would retire to the lugger. Curiosity soon brought the natives back, when they would dispose of the fiery liquor, and become helplessly drunk. On the boat's return whatever number was required would be collected. Thanks to the effort of the Church, the Government has passed laws to stop this evil, and now nearly all recruiting on the east coast, is done under supervision.
>
> A school was opened, religious instruction was held at night with services each day, and more instruction on Sundays. A dispensary also was opened for medical help. Of course these had very small beginnings, as language and suspicion hindered the work. That happened not four years ago. Now the school has over thirty children, so keen that in one quarter there were only four individual attendances missed.
>
> The aboriginal is not lacking in brain power, but suffering from the "inferiority complex." At the beginning he won't attempt anything, but once that is overcome, he delights in construction and is remarkably able with his hands. The girls also show the same with needlework, mat and basket weaving, also in fancy needlework, which, being abundant in pretty colours, is a great delight (Rowan 1928a:191-2).

Rowan went on to express the philosophy that progress is gained through example, not compulsion. Progress, of course, meant moving away from many cultural practices and towards mission ideals of village life, capitalist mode and Christian perspective.

> ... There is no compulsion, but if they like to produce it is marketed for them. The same line was taken as regards houses. There were two large camps at the start – they did not want houses. ... The staff had houses of grass and palm-leaves built, and now there are over twenty houses in the village, all built more than eighteen inches off the ground and able to be kept clean. The result is that the general health is showing great improvement.
>
> Just give the aboriginal an example of better things, and he will want to attain : compulsion is fatal. They are truly called a child race, and it would be hard to find a happier, laughter-loving family than the Lockhart River Mission crowd. Of course we sometimes see the other side and the tribal fighting; but thank God it is a thing of the past with the mission people.
>
> I think that most people will see that the Lockhart River Mission is not a school of laziness, but industry; but good as it is, it is little good without the sustaining power of religion. Here again there is no compulsion. The Rev A. C. Flint conducts a short service every morning and evening, which is fairly attended, and in spite of the handicap of language and the tremendous gap between devil-worship and Christianity, the message of the Gospel is being gladly received and is showing fruit in the changed and happier lives of a good number of people. Hymn singing is very much loved, whole evenings being spent in that way (Rowan 1928a:191-2).

The passing references to tribal fighting and devil-worship, indicate a side of Mission life largely hidden from view in his reports, i.e. that conflict did occur between people which needed control, and that traditional authorities were not readily abandoning Bora ceremonies or cultural attitudes as Rowan desired. The expression, 'devil-worship', may have a double reference to a typical view of 'heathen' worship, and also the Aboriginal practice of referring to the masked dancers of the Bora ceremonies as 'devils' for the ears of the uninitiated. Despite this language, Rowan's philosophy of change through example indicates that he preferred rational persuasion to coercive force. The handicap of language, and the love of hymn singing (probably Islander style) are to a degree, contradictory, and suggest a measure of resistance to cultural conversion, or some reinterpretation, on the one hand, and the acceptance of a socio-religious musical activity in Islander style, on the other hand.

Faced with conflict, Rowan did resort to forceful action. He and Poey Passi stopped people fighting with spears by breaking and burning the spears (i.e. during Passi's term, 1925-7).[9] Other oral accounts say that Rowan burnt all the fighting spears after a big fight about 1929, and would not allow initiation ceremonies (Chase 1980:116). In 1930

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9 Conversation with Cissy Rocky at Lockhart River, June 19, 1992.

he commented, "spear-fighting, thank God, seems to be a thing of the past, and really they are most law-abiding" (Rowan 1930:14). Disputes, though, continued to occur from time to time. The view that Rowan stopped initiation ceremonies may be exaggerated, or reflect his discouragement of some cultural practices in favour of Christian values, and pressure for the Aborigines to stay at the Mission for work rather than 'wander' for other activities. The decline of the ceremonies is also attributable to the extended periods that young men were away from the Mission on luggers (Chase 1980:117). In Rowan's report for 1927, he comments that, for a short period, "they all went bush and lived in the old native fashion, a lapse much to be regretted" (Rowan 1928b:53). In the same report he refers to "camp natives on the coast outside the mission". Quite likely Bora initiation ceremonies were held at this time.

The anthropologist, Donald Thomson, made two field trips to the region in 1928-9, spending four months with the Kuuku Ya'u people on the second trip. At the end of the first trip, after trekking across the Cape and back, he was admitted to the Bora initiation ceremonies then taking place at Port Stewart. Returning a few months later, he was admitted to the ceremonies of the Yankunyu and Kuuku Ya'u groups which were in progress for three months (Thomson 1933: 456-8). Some of this must have taken place at the Bora ground about 600 metres from the Mission, and the latter ceremonies may have been in Lloyd Bay. Rowan must have known about some of these ceremonies, and yet correspondence from Rowan to Thomson indicates a warm relationship until near the end of 1932, Rowan appreciating Thomson's gift of excellent photographs and Thomson appreciating Rowan capturing snakes for his collection (Rowan 1930-2). However, at that time there had been efforts to damage Thomson's reputation through accusations of impropriety to the Bishop, and when he asked permission to take some old men to visit sites at the Pascoe River during 1933, Rowan became angry and accused him "of trying to lure his people away" (Thomson 1933a). (A letter from Mrs Rowan to Thomson in 1938 indicates that friendliness was restored.) It appears that, until this occurred, Rowan accepted Thomson's research, and also accepted that he was not against the Mission (as

he was later accused), although Rowan clearly held that the Bora tradition was one to be left behind and fade away as new attitudes and ways were adopted. Thomson recorded in his diary some antipathy towards the Rowans during a visit in 1932, blaming them for the Bishop's negative view of him, and noted the Rowans' attempts to re-establish good terms with them.

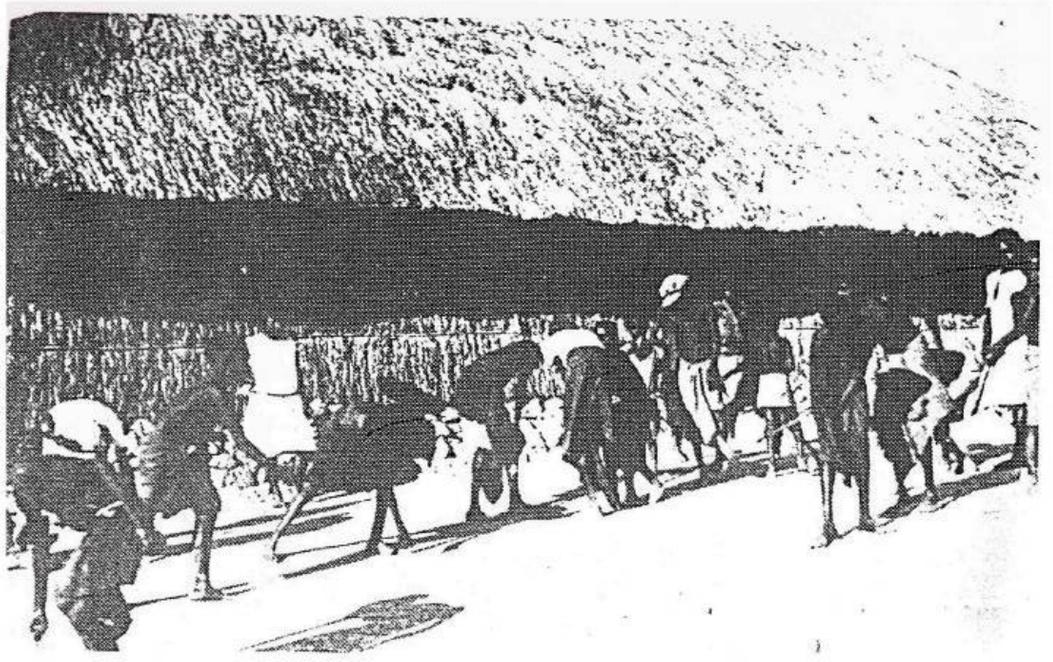
> Wednesday July 12th, 1932. ...Never see Rowan do anything for himself – directly or indirectly, though I believe he takes the Church service. The Island people have the size of him and feel contempt for the man. Cook making a feverish effort to clean up the store these last two days, with a gang of boys, "window dressing" for the visit of the Bishop of Carpentaria, who is believed to be coming here on Aug. 6th. Am anxious to be here to meet him and have a talk over things and so shall try to get back from Coen as quickly as possible (Thomson 1932).

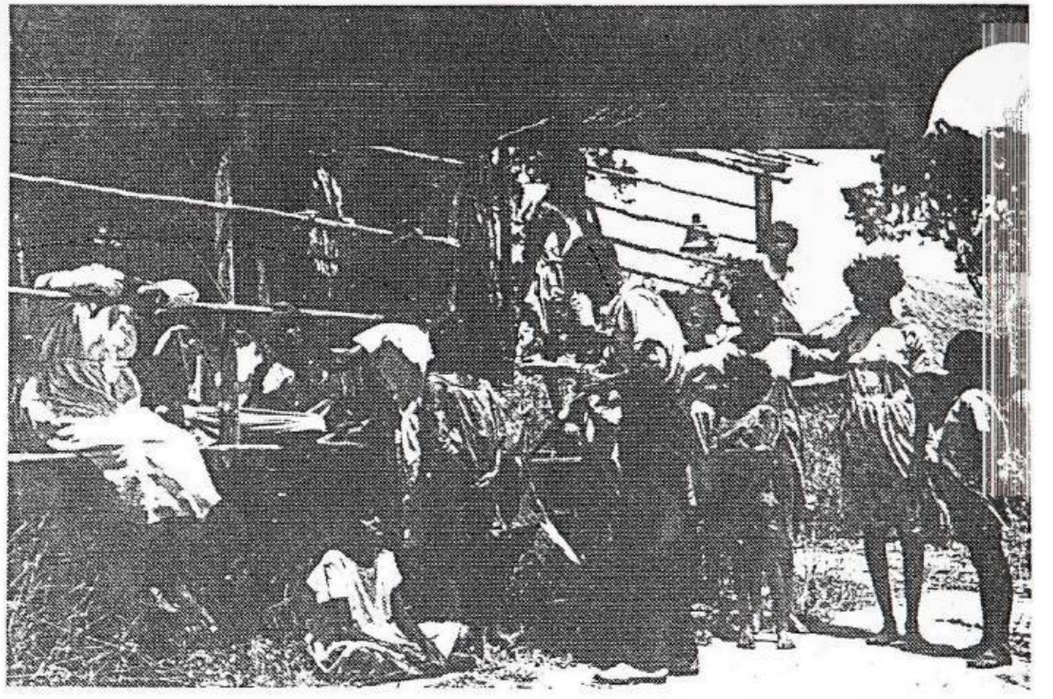
Thomson was not impressed by conditions at the Mission:

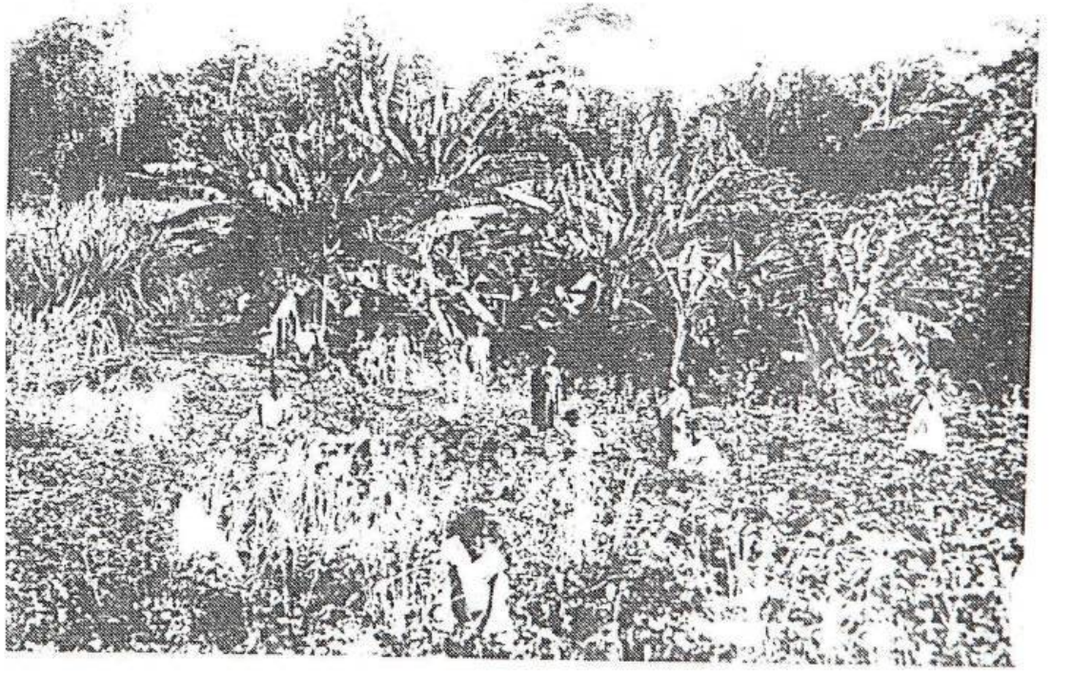
> Monday October 17th, 1932. ... Was appalled on going into the "Night Island 'Village'" this afternoon to find how wretched everybody is. Most of the men have been worked almost to a standstill owing to the inefficient and unmethodical way the Mission people do everything. All were more or less done up – bad colds and skin disease of the kind known by the Ompela as yikalla and to the Koko Ya'o as tilanyu were rife and the natives squat in their filthy rags among the mangy dogs in abject misery – which simply takes the form of losing interest in everything – in doing only what they are compelled to do by the Mission or to get food, The place reeks of disphoria. I returned to the camp utterly dejected – for one takes on a lot of the depression that hangs over the camps (Thomson 1932).

There is a pragmatic and accommodating side to Rowan's attitudes, and this is illustrated further in the flexibility shown in correspondence with the Chief Protector in 1934 concerning the case of Mary Nassis of Night Island, about 30 years old, who was legally married 12 years previously to a Brazilian, an older man, Raymond Nassis, at Thursday Island. She had left him soon after and was eventually sent back to Lockhart River in 1933. The following year she wished to marry one of her own people. Rowan raised the possibility of a tribal marriage and the Chief Protector agreed. She was the tribally married to Cobee in February 1935, and Rowan advised accordingly that:

> So far their conduct has been every thing to be desired, and I do not anticipate any more trouble with her. ... They are quite happy, and hope to get married should the demise of the old man Raymond Nassis make it possible. ... This marriage was acceptable to the tribe, and public opinion and power will prove too strong should either party wish to err (Rowan 1935b).







5.2.7. Frustrations of mission

The Chaplain, A C Flint, provided a less benign and more open picture of progress in his report on Christmas celebrations for 1927. He obviously did not have the same rapport or charisma with the men as did Rowan, and became frustrated by trying to compete with traditional seasonal dancing.

> It is not by any means an easy matter to bring home the Gospel message to nomadic tribes, and that is our job here at Lockhart. The outward attractions of the Christmas season, extra food and corroborees, draw the people to the main settlement. Naturally one tries to make the fullest possible use of such an unique opportunity by using every possible means to proclaim Christ. One valuable method is by means of really good pictures, and so the lantern and the Copping slides of the Life of our Lord were overworked for a few weeks.
>
> But do not let any suppose that this in itself will bring the people, for it did not do so, and practically no one except the children came to these special efforts, and to see these attractive pictures and hear of their Saviour. The bald truth is that people such as those who live here badly **need** us, but do not particularly **want** us or our message. The desire has to be created. ... Early on Christmas Day our usual few communicants gathered round the Altar to worship and adore the new-born King. (Flint 1928: 217).

Flint also reported a settling-down difficulty following the New Year's day celebrations when store privileges were withdrawn to reinforce the necessity for labour. A few months later, Flint's frustration with the "nomadic character of many of the people" was reported in The Carpentarian, with the comment that: "as in other Missions under similar conditions, work is being concentrated on the children" (Diocese of Carpentaria 1928). However, he did not last, as often occurred with those who did not fit, and Flint left the Mission in November 1928 after only 15 months (Davies 1928:49). A typical pattern for Lockhart people of passive resistance, and judgement of Flint's poor rapport, by their absence, is evident behind his words of frustration. Flint's focus was on the 'Devotional' side of Mission activity, and he had little appreciation of the accommodations necessary to balance his desire for 'Devotional' with the immediate realities of the 'Affirmative'. The contrast with Harry Rowan's 14 years, and R C Cook's 10 years, is an indication that these latter two were missionaries of calibre, who were able to form effective personal and practical relationships with the Aborigines, i.e. they realised the accommodations necessary on their part.

A request to the ABM for a replacement for Flint was withdrawn because of the Mission's debt of £577. The inaugural subsidy had proved insufficient (Year Book DOC 1927-8:31). Rowan expected to repay this by going without a Chaplain for two years and by acting as school teacher himself (Rowan 1929:65). Unfortunately, the debt increased to £1026 due to expensive repairs to the mission ketch in 1929 (Davies 1930:49). This situation of lack of finance from both Government and Church sources indicates both the indifference of Europeans to Aborigines, remote from their sensitivities and marginalised by the colonial process, and also the unreality of the expectation that the Church could quickly transform the Aborigines into self-supporting settlers. These financial pressures were exacerbated by the effects of the economic depression in the early 1930s. The Bank refused the Mission permission to overdraw their account in 1929, and by 1931: "the pressure was on. The Australian Board of Missions was forced to reduce its grants to Carpentaria by twenty per cent, and the already slender salaries paid to lay workers had to be reduced by one-tenth" (Rayner 1962:493; The Carpentarian, January 1931). The Bishop inevitably had to retrench staff in the diocese, and by 1936, Lockhart River and Mitchell River Missions each had debts of £600, and the Missions were very much in maintenance mode at this time (The Carpentarian, April 1937; Rayner 1962:493).

In 1935 the Bishop arranged with Fr. W Nicholls, the newly appointed Rector of Cooktown, to visit the Lockhart every three months. By travelling up and down on the *Wandana*, he would have 10 days there each visit (ABM Review July 1, 1935:69; Diocese of Carpentaria 1935b:665). [He was not the same W Nicholls who became Chaplain in 1937.] On a visit at the end of January 1936, Nicholls reported 80 communicants on Sunday, two baptisms at Evensong, and a wedding on the Monday. On the following Sunday there were 90 communicants, and five couples, who were married in civil weddings due to the absence of a priest, had their marriages blessed. This was after commenting during the week "that this was the next best thing to the sacrament of Holy Matrimony as intended by the Church, and without ado those five

couples came forward" (Nicholls 1936:62). These statistics indicate some institutionalisation of Christian practice and rallying of the baptised during these short bursts of ministry. The conventions were observed better through gathering for special periodic events, without the pressure and routinisation of regular religious practice under a resident priest.

Rowan, it is clear, worked with dedication and perseverance to build up a settled and self-supporting lifestyle in the Mission. His leadership soon shifted from charismatic to legal-rational in emphasis, although there are elements of charisma in the continuing respect he received as 'boss', despite the bureaucratic and coercive aspects of Mission life. The reduced authority of traditional leaders, and the bureaucratic expression of the legal-rational authority, are shown in the appointment of Aboriginal councillors and police in the early years. Their activities met with Rowan's satisfaction (Rowan 1929:66). Gardens were developed to produce staples such as sweet potato, cassava, banana and pawpaw. Cotton was also planted, but failed to be a profitable enterprise. There were some opportunities for paid employment at the Mission, on fishing boats or on the mission ketch 'Abaipil', which was used for carrying stores from Thursday Island, and as a trochus shell and fishing vessel. A boiler was purchased to cure the fish. (Bayton 1965:155; Diocese of Carpentaria 1925:109-110).

5.2.8. Girls' dormitory

A girls' dormitory was established in 1928, supervised initially by Mrs Flint and Kitty Savage, and then by the Aboriginal couple, Jack and Margaret Temple (Year Book DOC 1927-8:31; Rowan 1931:80). The main reason for the dormitory appeared to be to improve their health and nutrition. In 1930, it was described as a building 'without bolts and locks' and without problems of girls running away (Diocese of Carpentaria 1930:1283). In 1933, and again in 1937, the dormitory was closed down for a period, but re-opened when it was felt that the girls were not being adequately looked after (Year Book DOC 1934-5:36; Rowan 1937e:2; Nicholls 1939:145-6). In each case this was because of the effects of extra dry seasons on the gardens, and the need for extra food

support to maintain their health, while at the same time, reducing the need to engage in hunter-gathering subsistence production. In February 1935 he wrote, "The dry weather looks very bad for our Garden this year, we have a small amount in, but have now to wait for more rain. We are hoping to keep ourselves going, by Beche-de-mer fishing if the rains do not come, but it will be a hard year" (Rowan 1935a). Rowan reported in 1938, "The Dormitory was opened again, as the people starving to keep the children with them" (Rowan 1938a:2). It was closed again during the war and never re-opened.[10]

5.2.9. Mrs Rowan

Rowan went to Sydney on furlough in November 1931 and left Mr Cook in charge (ABM Review Dec 15, 1931:163; Diocese of Carpentaria 1932:387). In February he announced his engagement to Miss Le Poer Trench of Sydney (ABM Feb 15, 1932:185). In a personal letter to Donald Thomson, he revealed that he met her on Sunday and became engaged on the following Thursday (Rowan 1930-2). They were married at St. Mary's Vaucluse on May 5th 1932 (ABM May 15, 1932). They both came from Ireland where they went for a year's leave of absence in 1936 (ABM Nov 1, 1935:134).

Mrs Rowan had previous contact with Aborigines at Pooncarie in NSW where she was known as "Naunga". This name was given to a launch purchased, from funds raised in England and Ireland, to ferry in supplies for the mission from ships. Mrs Rowan received a commendable mention by her husband in 1934 because "she very ably helped to see things through" during an influenza epidemic when Mr Cook was on leave and the hall was used to house an average of thirty patients for three weeks (Rowan 1934:65; ABM Review June 1, 1937:91). She gave voluntary help in the Store and in 1937 was put in charge "on a modest salary" (Diocese of Carpentaria 1938a:48). It appears, however, that she became dissatisfied with life at the Mission and was impatient with the Aborigines. An Aboriginal woman in 1992 remembered her as bossy and strict. If girls misbehaved, she said, they had to wear a dress made from a sack with red binding and a

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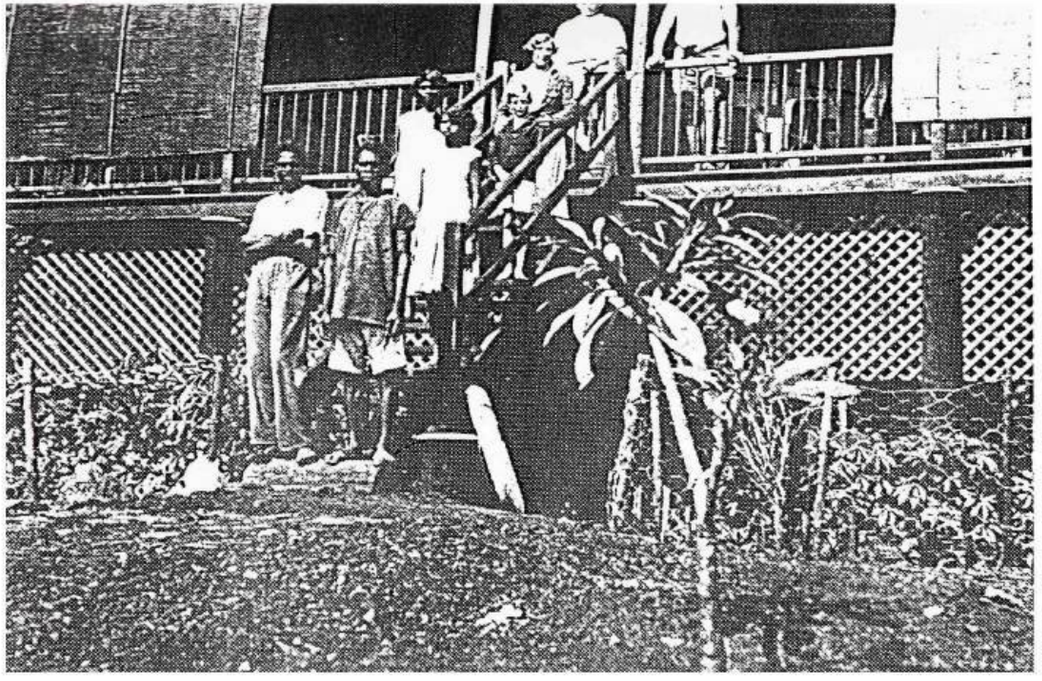
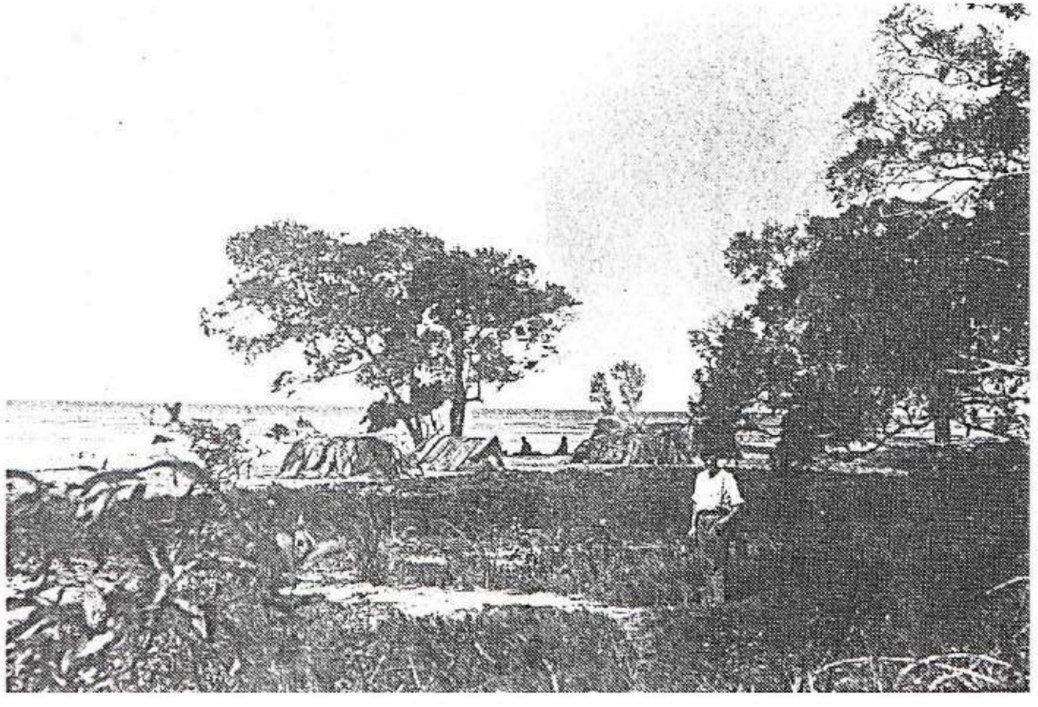
10 Conversation with John Warby at Rockhampton, August 4, 1992.





notice of the misdemeanour, e.g. "I am a thief". Boys who misbehaved were made to wear sack shirt and trousers, had their head shaved on one side and were put to work on the roads. Apparently Mrs Rowan kept the dog and cat population down by putting them in a bag and dumping them in the sea.[11] Another woman remembered her as a "wild, rough woman".[12] These oral accounts reveals her determined character and the disciplinary side of the Mission at that time.

The year's furlough taken by the Rowans presented difficulties for the Bishop, for there were no funds for a replacement, or for a Chaplain to relieve the pressure on the Cooks, who by this time had a child, Jennifer Gene. The ABM took the opportunity to appeal for funds.

> ... funds are barely sufficient for present necessary expenditure. If all our readers assimilated this fact, and put their heads together, they might easily do something real to help the Bishop and ABM to a happy conclusion of this difficulty (ABM Review, Nov 1, 1935:134).

5.2.10. Mr and Mrs Cook

Charles Cook was a strong and stable supporter for Rowan for ten years. He arrived at the Mission on February 14, 1927, to be involved in both medical and agricultural work, and remained until he was transferred to Mitchell River Mission in October 1937. He was known as "the first doctor" who did a very good job, and in June 1934, he married a teacher who had served in New Guinea.[13] Not a lot is said about the wives of white staff, but there are indications of their general involvement in the work of the Mission. Mrs Cook led the women's Baptism and Confirmation class (Ware 1935:162), and "was a great help to old people"[14]. The Carpentarian reported: "Mrs Cook has quite settled down to her new life at the Lockhart and is very busy trying in all sorts of ways to make life more interesting and happy and worth living for the children and the elder girls of the Mission" (Diocese of Carpentaria 1935:616). She also gave extra tuition to the Islander

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11 Conversation with Cissy Rocky at Lockhart River, June 19, 1992.
12 Conversation with Ivy Ropeyarn at Lockhart River, April 24, 1993.
13 Conversation with Cissy Rocky at Lockhart River, April 24, 1993.
14 Conversation with Cissy Rocky at Lockhart River, April 24, 1993.

teacher Kitty Savage, who was commended by the visiting priest (Nicholls 1936:62). Mr Cook was responsible for the developments of the agricultural side of the Mission but also was involved in medical care. His writing of 1933 show him as a practical man who developed a good relationship with the Aboriginal people. "Those who are intimately acquainted with the tribal and family life of the aborigine usually discover the native's loyalty to a white person who is ready to help them to progress" (Cook 1933:103). He saw the Mission as a necessary response to the disruption that contact caused to Aboriginal life, and considered that the old people were well aware of its benefits.

> Family life to the aborigine is everything, and any interference in the family life affects the tribal and social organisation. Such interference is fatal. I think that was, in a dim way, foreseen by a small body of old men aborigines of the Lockhart River, who approached the Bishop of Carpentaria in 1924 to open a mission station there. ... One of the first buildings to be erected was a dormitory, as the old people desired to place their children where they would be safe and free from contact with undesirable influences.
>
> This shows that the elder men of the tribes are fully alive to the question of the future of their race or tribes. ... As a missionary, I am very much concerned with regard to the aboriginal women living with the white men on the Cape. The ultimate destination of the women is Palm Island. Deportation by the Government is, I believe, one of the chief factors in causing the slow but sure extinction of our native races (Cook 1933:102-3).

The suggestion that the old men approved of the dormitory is surprising, but may well reflect their experience of the abuse of women by outsiders, as Cook's concern indicates, as well as the food they received. The medical side would have put Cook is close contact with the women, and his comments again reflect the interference of white men, hinting at the VD cases that occurred.

> A small hospital was promised by the Chief Protector of aborigines eighteen months ago. This is a real need, but a greater one is the supply of nourishing foods. Roughly, about 1,100 cases are treated annually. The care of expectant mothers and the after-care of mothers and babies is also difficult owing to the present lack of accommodation and the necessary foods, and constitutes a very real problem in our efforts to foster the home-life of the aborigines – a home-life which they are endeavouring to establish.
>
> The health of the aborigines is usually good, except where they have long been in contact with a certain white element, as a result of which there is disease and amongst the children a general weakness (Cook 1933:103).

Cook was encouraged by the response to agricultural development, which reflected the influence and example of Islanders on the Mission in promoting this Mission aim. An

old man, Harry Seiu, related to me a story that characterised the beginnings of the mission as a time of digging and planting potatoes and root vegetables (*mayi*), as well as pawpaws and bananas, and of eating meat and fish together with *mayi.* (Thompson 1972). The Islander residents, including Fr. Sailor Gabey, were praised for their gardening skills, but in the mid 1930s, poor rainfall meant that the gardens were less productive and had to be supplemented by hunting and gathering (Year Books DOC 1932-3 and 1934-5). The Islander influence was seen to be important in inculcating the idealised development of a settled agricultural life-style.

> Sailor Gabey's activities do not end with the Church. They show very prominently in many hard and hot days working in the gardens, which means that he is ready to lead all in working to maintain themselves and reach a higher moral stage of life. ... In all departments a steady progress has been maintained and the people are happy and contented, and more ready to give up the nomadic life, as the increase in gardens show (Year Book DOC 1932-3:42).

The last comment quite likely reflected a good season when the people were happy to remain close to a reliable food supply. This was negated the following year when the garden supply was inadequate and it was reported that "the people will have to hunt to keep themselves whilst replanting" (Year Book DOC 1934-5:37). Cook's earlier comments on agriculture reflect his own good rapport with the people.

> Contrary to the general opinion held concerning the aborigine as an agriculturalist, the encouragement and experience gained during a period of six and a half years proves that, given reasonable opportunities and sympathy in their efforts to cultivate and make gardens, the aborigine is capable and successful in partly supporting himself and his family from the results of his labours on the land (Cook 1933:103)

Such optimism has been repeated by others in both mission and government staff and it is not always recognised how much such apparent success depends on the context of institutional supervision and personal support by experienced whites. The first quote from Cook above expresses such a symbiotic relationship in his case. In later years, individual Aborigines attempted small scale growing of some root vegetables, pawpaws and bananas, but general agricultural practices did not persist without organised white direction. Environmental factors of poor soil and insufficient rain also made agricultural development difficult, and the continuous labour required for long-term gain did not compare well with the more immediate gains of hunting and gathering. These factors

indicate that non-traditional practices of settled food production did not become absorbed culturally in daily living and by focal leaders among Lockhart River people. Such cultural transformation requires considerably more than knowing the practices of agriculture, it also requires a long-term legitimation by traditional leadership, and a process of internalisation through socialisation practices.

Cook was left in charge at different times, including the time of the Rowans' 12 month's furlough in Ireland, and the following comments reveal his experience of this, and his steady and quiet dedication.

> The missions of the Church, working through the Australian Board of Missions, seek quietly to fulfil their tasks. Life on the station is often a varied one. This is particularly so when, as often happens, only one white man is on the station for months at a time. But he is kept busy with duties which include the signing up of crews for trochus and beche-de-mer fishing, supervising garden work, attendance at the hospital, settling tribal disputes, and the regular conduct of the worship and teaching of the Church.
>
> The school also demands attention, houses await erection, wells must be sunk, the general store requires supervision, whilst many other things must be done as soon as time and opportunity allow (Cook 1933:104).

W Nicholls noted on his visit in 1936: "The health of the people is wonderfully good, and everything seems to be running very smoothly, thanks to the wholehearted way that Mr Cook and his wife are standing up to the double work caused by the absence of Mr and Mrs Rowan on furlough" (Nicholls 1936:62-3). Several months before the Rowans returned, the population of the Mission was increased due to:

> the round up of natives far and wide by the government patrols, and the settling of them all at the Lockhart. ... Natives have been brought in from the Cohen [sic], Morton [sic], Blue Mountain and Portland Roads districts. There remains now only one more batch to be brought in, namely, that from the Port Stewart district. This lot is to be conveyed to the Lockhart by the mission launch "Naunga".
>
> It may readily be imagined what an unsettling thing this influx of strangers is for the mission, and what a great deal of extra work and wise and prayerful consideration are required to make sure that all goes well, that the balance of justice and fair treatment is maintained, and that the arrangements made are the best for old and new alike (ABM Review Nov 1, 1936:198-9).

Fortunately the garden season was very good that year and a large area planted. Cook's Report for 1936 indicates that the additional arrivals made the number of indigent Aborigines receiving relief, 115 (Year Book DOC 1936-7:26). Other reports state that

the new arrivals in July numbered over 70 (ABM Review Feb 1, 1937:31), and each was given a cultivated garden plot on arrival (Diocese of Carpentaria 1937:772). In 1933, Flinders Island people had been brought in, their number making up for some deaths due to an influenza epidemic (ABM Review July 1, 1934:65).

The Cooks emerge from the reports as a warm and sensitive couple who were *individuals* exercising charismatic leadership that stimulated the development of the Mission aims in positive, participatory ways which respected the dignity of the people, as confirmed by surviving Aborigines who remember them. Their roles lay particularly in the 'Affirmative' side of practical Christianity, but with a balanced understanding of its complementary ' Devotional' foundation.

5.2.11. Other developments

Work began on an airstrip in 1936 at the instigation of the Commonwealth Air Board, which needed it as an operations base for a short time. The ABM Review noted too optimistically that it was used regularly by the "North Queensland Airways" (ABM Review Nov 1, 1936:199). Work on the strip continued after Rowan's return. He recorded in the monthly report of March 1937 that "an air landing ground in partly cleared, at present about 300 by 150 yds" (Rowan 1937a). In April, the clearing was stopped by Flight Lieutenant McLean who felt it was unsuitable, but then in November a small plane landed and the centre track was being surfaced (Rowan 1937b, d). Evidently it was not suitable for the original purpose. "Now the fiat has gone forth that the 'Garnet', the type of plane being used in the geophysical survey, is not to land there, as the site is not suitable for its requirements" (ABM Review Sept 1, 1937:155).

In September 1937, cattle work began after 250 head were brought from Mitchell River Mission and after fencing work was completed (Rowan 1937c:1; 1938c:143). This became another avenue of employment and food for the Mission.

> This beginning with cattle at the Lockhart is going to make a big difference to the mission. By providing in time an abundance of fresh meat and milk the cattle

> should be a splendid asset, and an the other hand they promise a great deal of extra work and expense if the herd is to be maintained and prosper (ABM Review Nov 1, 1937:187).

In 1938, an Aboriginal man of mixed descent, Willie Hudson, arrived from Mitchell River as cattleman (ABM Review Nov 1, 1938:206). Outside employment in the marine industries also remained an important source of income. This kept young men away from Mission influence for lengthy periods, and also aided the decline of bush living, use of language and ceremonial practices (Chase 1980a:117).

5.2.12. The dilemma of dependency

The practices of supporting young girls in a dormitory, and providing daily meals for children, both highlight a basic dilemma of the Mission station approach. On the one hand, both were paternalistic practices which created a dependency syndrome that became self-perpetuating and difficult to reverse. The open-style dormitory was primarily based on health concerns, and Cook indicates that this paternal care was readily accepted by older people, presumably incorporating the Mission support into the context of extended family care. Rowan closed the dormitory several times to avoid this dependency. On the other hand, they forwarded the Mission aims of protection from outside white influence, and the enhancement of physical and social conditions of women.

Mission policy also aimed to replace hunter-gathering nomadic life-style with 'higher' practices of agriculture, etc. The capitalist mode, however, required more core support than was forthcoming. In times of low rain and poor harvest, the dormitory was reopened to provide support for the girls whom they considered most vulnerable. However, supplementary subsistence production was possible and reluctantly approved by the missionaries at such times. The dilemma of poor seasons and lack of outside support, meant a choice – either the slow down of resocialisation by allowing subsistence production, or the risk of creating dependency by giving some support, and so allowing them to remain in the Mission for the processes of resocialisation to proceed.

Missionaries considered that these limited support practices, together with medical services, to be life-saving and desirable development measures, despite the dependency created, and they expected education, adoption of new life-styles, and development of self-support, to reduce the necessity. Unfortunately, resources were never adequate for the development of sustainable industries, and peripheral underdevelopment was produced instead.

An impetus to perpetuating these dependency services can be the feeling of 'doing something worthwhile' that supports welfare service industry workers, government servants and missionaries, in their commitment to maintaining their roles. This attitude tends to be inherent in the bureaucracy that develops with legal-rational authority and becomes self-perpetuating. It takes an alternative attitude that seeks always to place choices and the ability to take control in the hands of those affected, to break through the dependency syndrome. Rowan's aim in establishing the Mission was not to create dependency, but self-support. This self-support, however, had to be gained through resocialisation to the capitalist mode of production and abandonment of the hunter-gatherer mode. Inevitably, missionaries maintained control of the direction of change, and only allowed Aboriginal decision-making and leadership within these parameters, and so dependency on the Mission infrastructure, and on colonial social relations, was created and perpetuated.

On the economic side, the aim of capitalist self-support was handicapped from the beginning by lack of sufficient capital and staff. Half of the initial government grant of £1000 was spent on purchasing a vessel (Davies 1925:52), and, of the £500 promised by ABM for 1925, only £100 had been received by the end of the year (Rowan 1926:50). In subsequent reports a large debt continued to dog the Mission. In 1928 the debt was £577 and, despite an effort to overcome this by doing without a Chaplain for two years, repairs to the mission vessel caused the debt to rise to £1026 in 1929 (Davies 1930:49). Again in 1933, there were no funds for a Chaplain and this continued until 1937.

5.2.13. The end of 'Rowan-time'

Rowan concluded his work of establishing the Lockhart River Mission in July 1938, after 14 years of service. He served with enterprise, perseverance, firmness, dedication and some sensitivity, to establish the institutional pattern of the Mission. He often had to double as teacher and chaplain. There was never sufficient capital to fully achieve the intended self-support, and the Aborigines became dependent on the Mission infrastructure and white leadership. A personal letter from Mrs Rowan to Donald Thomson reveals something of her feelings upon leaving in 1938.

> We are leaving the Mission in November, the Bishop's opportunity policy does not seem to be getting the natives anywhere, it's an impossible situation to have as head of affairs, a churchman when the material side of the work to my mind is really much more essential, of course all these good Anglo-Catholics would not agree with me, all the Parsons who have been here would say the religious side of the work has progressed splendidly. I say it has not, it's either fear or superstition that makes the people go to Church, it's a sad sad state of affairs. The ABM so the Bishop says, has not got the money to assist with productive works for the people, then they ought to be ashamed of themselves to keep on the control of these poor creatures (Rowan, Le P 1938:1-2).

Mrs Rowan clearly favoured the 'Affirmative' side of mission, and was disdainful of the religiosity of those tied narrowly to the 'Devotional'. Her comments reveal considerable frustration with the lack of material progress and impatience with the limited view of Church officials. At the same time, the oral reports about her indicate her impatience and anger at the resistance of the Aborigines to change. She commented further to Thomson on religious attitudes, both theirs, hers and that of the priest, W H Nicholls.

> A good many of the old people have died, poor old Dick Policeman went in Feb, but have since heard this was a case of pouri-pouri (thus the strength of their religion). The Flinders Island tribe are dying out too, we have very few left now, it's so sad living amongst them when they go, one misses them.
>
> We have a Parson now & his Churchmanship is so high & non understandable, that I have given up going, I think it's too pathetic practising all this on the natives, if we don't understand it, I'm sure its beyond their primitive minds, King Charlie thinks it's bora belonga white man (Rowan Le P 1938:3).

The blinkered view of the Church support system is shown in The Carpentarian. "It is good to know that Father Nicholls is so happy there as Chaplain. He is obviously doing good work and getting on well with the people" (Diocese of Carpentaria 1938b:91). The reference to 'bora belonga white man' epitomises Aboriginal perceptions, firstly the parallel understandings of Christian ritual, especially in marking life transitions, and the

Bora initiation practice. The expression also indicates the association of Christianity with the incorporation of outside goods and values, and the lack of real indigenisation of the Christian Faith at that time.

5.3. Assessment of 'Rowan time'

At one level, the aims of the Mission were partly achieved in that the Aborigines became adapted to a more permanent village-based life-style, acquired skills in gardening and cattle work, and had improved health care. A local church was also established with almost all the community baptised in a relatively short period. The references in reports to regular or fair attendances at church services indicate that there was a core group of Aborigines who had commitment to Christian beliefs, in association with closer involvement with the missionaries, and in community leadership. A wider peripheral group was more nominal or uncommitted in adherence to Mission values, and more self-contained in Aboriginal values. The developments of the Mission, however, involved a decline in self-determination, removal from their traditional lands, and decline of traditional languages and ceremonies. The Aborigines became more dependent on outside support which was also inadequate, and the ongoing structure of the Mission was dependent on the skills and cultural ideals of the missionary staff.

Harry Rowan attempted an integrated approach of religious and social change. He saw the Christian Faith as the foundation for the transformation of the Aborigines' lives that would turn them from the 'primitive' to the 'civilised', in harmony with the economic and industrial changes that were seen to epitomise civilisation. In practice, he was handicapped on two fronts. On the spiritual side, he attempted to introduce new beliefs by a replacement method, i.e. giving up old ways and taking on new beliefs and practices. At the time there was no missiological understanding that would take genuine account of existing beliefs and practices and seek either accommodation, fulfilment or synthesis with them in introducing the new. As a result, the connections or otherwise of cultural beliefs were not addressed positively, and they largely continued either alongside

the new ways or under the surface. Hence, with the majority of Aborigines, the Christian Faith did not have deep roots, but was accepted as part of the mission ethos. The replacement method was not effective in bringing about deep-seated changes in spirituality. The early openness to baptism by many who came into the Mission was met by a lack of openness to their spirituality that set the die against an effective indigenisation of the Christian message. On the economic side, Rowan never had adequate resources of funds and manpower to meet the ideals of the practical development of a self-supporting Christian village community. The realisation that adequate infrastructure development is beyond the resources of a voluntary body such as the Anglican Church membership, particularly without the establishment backing of its homeland, and that it was futile to persist with the inadequate results, was not finally accepted for another 29 years.

Other basic and significant difficulties can be discerned. There were basic culture clashes, which both sides probably did not fully understand. These included the obvious differences such as ways of settling disputes, attitudes to hygiene and child-rearing. Less obvious were differences in leadership patterns and decision making processes, and the fundamental conflict between subsistence production habits and attitudes, and the expectations and attitudes required for an accumulative, profit-based industry economy which the Mission espoused. These are deep level differences that persist to the present at Lockhart River. Another inherent difficulty which had full impact in the post-Mission era was the effect of the combination of secular and spiritual aims in a miniature situation of an established Church having secular control. I will now discuss these points in turn.

Lockhart was typical of many Missions in bringing together Aborigines from different clans. Authority in these clans was based primarily in obligations to close kin. This was reinforced through initiation and through ties to land. The people of the Lockhart River Mission were drawn from small groups along 200km of coastline. The dialects were very close in this region and, although wider contact did occur for initiation ceremonies,

there was no single authority structure at this level of contact. Instead, important decisions were made by consensus among the ceremonial or other appropriate leaders. The Mission, on the other hand, introduced a more centralised authority structure at this wider level. The consequence of this was that the authority of individuals and the decisions that were taken in democratic fashion by elected representatives, were not necessarily accepted per se by the Mission community, unless they were accepted with consensus, or enforced by Mission authorities.

Secondly, the subsistence life-style of hunter-gatherers has its own deeply-rooted ethic which conflicts with capitalist aims. The hunter-gatherer's objective is to obtain food requirements for immediate use from naturally available resources for minimum effort. Combined with this is the strong obligation to share the supply with kin in prescribed ways, particularly in hard times. Hoarding of supply is considered antisocial. The Mission alternative required consistent effort, often without immediate gain, and the accumulation of capital and goods for the future, to be successful. The Aboriginal ethic, however, expected minimum effort with direct results, and when there appeared a benevolent source of supply in the Mission, there was natural pressure for this to be shared for immediate needs. Instead, the Aborigines were brought to depend partly on non-natural food sources and on a cash economy. They no longer had full control of the means of production, and became dependent on the capitalist mode and the Mission patronage.

A third difficulty for the long term was the merging of Church and State in the structure of the Mission. In one respect this was an advantage because Aborigines do not make a separation between secular and spiritual aspects of life. The main disadvantage, however, was in the confusion of the Christian Faith with western civilisation, its material benefits and power relations. The Church was readily seen as the provider of material benefits, and spiritual or ritual commitments were easily seen as the required obligation for receiving these benefits. This was more evident after the handover of

administration to the Government when there was some decline in church activities. There are, however, indications of genuine commitment by a core of residents. Despite the separate roles of superintendent and priest, the priest could not be perceived as separate to the Mission, and Church involvement readily assumed some compulsory connotations. This was enhanced by the high ritual emphasis of the Anglo-Catholic tradition that was introduced, and by Islander styles of leadership. Such deep-seated cultural attitudes are most resistant to change, and, combined with the inadequacies of Church and Government support, the expectations of a rapid transformation of the Aborigines' life-style were over-optimistic, and instead of integrating Aborigines into a sustainable capitalist mode, the Mission placed them in a situation of underdevelopment, and made them dependent on external support structures.

The religious activity of the Mission was perceived by both missionaries and Aborigines in holistic terms. The missionaries' attempts to replace traditional forms by English/Islander Christian forms, partly succeeded through the effects of outside employment on traditional practices, and by the acceptance of Islander sacred and secular practices, but they did not attempt to negotiate theologically with Aboriginal religion. This resulted in some re-interpretation of introduced practices, resulting in the holding together of two religious traditions, without substantial integration or indigenisation of Christian belief and practice.

6. World War II and its Aftermath

The Rowan era was a time of firm, yet pragmatic, leadership under the Rowans, effective support by the Cooks, and indigenously-oriented leadership by Pacific and Torres Strait Islanders. On the part of Aborigines, it was a time of accommodation to the patronage or 'boss-ship' of Rowan and other missionaries, and the incorporation of cultural and religious practices in a way that deflected total resocialisation and loss of cultural values through a process of partial integration by some, and nominal adherence by others. The effects of institutionalisation and resistance to it, begin to show at the end of the Rowans' time, in the missionaries' frustration at the resistance to religious and social change, and the minimal funding support to forward their objectives. On the Aboriginal side, some southern groups including Flinders Island, Port Stewart and Lamalama people left the Mission.[15] Following the departure of the Rowans, the general lack of direction and state of underdevelopment in the Mission persisted. The War interrupted any development and brought respite from the Mission environment as the Aborigines were dispersed into bush camps for about six months (some took longer to return). The following decade was characterised by the bare minimum of missionary leadership, increasing outside influences, and increased social unrest in the Mission.

6.1. New Staff

The change-over took place in 1938 on an unsettling note. Bishop Davies recorded the following entry in the Bishops Day Book for May 16-25:

> .. visit to Lockhart River Mission with Protector of Aboriginals, a Doctor and Diocesan Auditor. Reports re starvation of Natives made by Superintendent proceed to be incorrect. Arrange that Superintendent leave early July.

The Bishop returned to take charge himself from June 8 to July 6, and then appointed the Revd William Nicholls, who had been Chaplain and school teacher since November 1937, as acting superintendent. Nicholls appreciated the assistance, for four months, of Mr J W Chapman, the experienced missionary from Mitchell River Mission. "His

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15 Information provided by Bruce Rigsby, January, 1995.

experienced help in the hospital and his intimate understanding of the aboriginals has proved very valuable" (Diocese of Carpentaria 1938c:124). The lay missionary, Herbert (Harry) Johnson, who arrived at the Mission in October 1938 as his assistant, eventually succeeded Nicholls as superintendent on 3 April, 1941, and stayed until 1948. He had previous experience at Yarrabah Mission. Johnson's "work is mostly concerned with the store and supervision of outside activities, e.g., gardening, building, well-sinking, etc." (Diocese of Carpentaria 1939a:155). Bishop Davies hesitancy about the suitability of Nicholls is indicated by the Bishop delaying his official licensing of Nicholls as Superintendent until February 2, 1939 (Davies 1937-42). As already noted, Nicholls had a high 'Devotional' emphasis. He saw the spiritual work to be the primary object of the Mission, with a strong sacramental emphasis on Baptism and Holy Communion as the central focus. The ritual emphasis appeared to bring a good response from the men, and the 25 candidates for Confirmation in October were mostly men. "It is one of the never failing causes for thankfulness the way the men respond to the call to the Faith. They are far more regular in their attendance at services and classes than the women" (Diocese of Carpentaria 1939b:236). His preparation for Christmas in 1938 was a series of penitential addresses. "During this season attendances were exceedingly good, and penitents were numerous" (Diocese of Carpentaria 1939a:155).

The girls' dormitory was reopened in March, 1938, "as it was found that these children were not getting sufficient food; at the same time some of the school-boys had to be given meals daily. A new room, 20ft. by 16ft. was added to the girls' dormitory" (ABM Review-Report, August 1, 1939 :145-6). From May to July there was an epidemic of bronchial coughs which led to the death of 35 people, mainly aged people, but also some very young children. Of the population of 375, "102 were aged indigents drawing rations, the majority of these being persons who had been sent into the mission during the last two years" (ABM Review-Report, August 1, 1939 :145). Willie Hudson arrived from Mitchell River to take charge of the cattle work in July, 1938.

6.2. *Financial pressures*

Funding was still tight and Bishop Davies reported that 1939 and the beginning of 1940 "has been the most difficult period that I have experienced in my nineteen years in Carpentaria" (ABM Review June 1, 1940: 81). The staff level was reduced "to 'danger point" so that Mitchell River and Lockhart River had only one European family each during the wet season. "At both these places it would be possible, but very difficult to get someone in to relieve if the other members of this thin line gave way through sickness. It has been an exceptionally anxious time" (ABM Review June 1, 1940: 82). Transport was a particular concern to the Bishop. The long distances to the Missions were usually travelled by sea, requiring substantial costs for the operation of vessels. He made strong plea to the Australian Board of Missions for an increase in the funding for the Carpentaria Aboriginal Missions to more than double on the grounds that "the Board is asking Carpentaria to conduct individual Aboriginal Missions at about one-third the cost of Yarrabah and Forrest River (Davies 1939:1). He also argued that having only six European staff for three Missions was inadequate, and the employment of Aborigines to make up for this was not satisfactory. He concluded with a threat to close down the newly-opened Mission at Edward River. Some increase was given (ABM Review June 1, 1940: 81).

Despite the low Government subsidies in Queensland, a contributor to the ABM Review claimed that "Queensland has always been and still is foremost in caring for the natives" ("Grit" in ABM Review, April 1, 1941). The Archbishop of Brisbane also lauded the Government in his report to the Synod of the Province of Queensland in 1941 (Wand 1941:6). The praise appeared to relate to the greater control exercised in the segregation and resocialisation of Aborigines in Queensland, compared to the Northern Territory. At the same time, the Deputy Director of Native Affairs circulated the Missions with a review of funding means, including "assistance in implements, machinery etc for the industrial expansion of the Missions", and with a request for views on the present basis of subsidies and assistance, in particular how the newly-introduced Child Endowment

payments might be utilised. "Proposals with respect to greater facilities for manual and rural training, housing and general accommodation should be indicated" (Deputy Director of Native Affairs 1941). The Bishop commented in his reply the following June, that the war had caused increases in Mission costs, less outside labour was available and "Individual Child Endowment will not help Mission funds appreciably as this will go to adult, able-bodied, persons who maintain their own families. Our dormitory is for orphan girls or girls who cannot live with their parents" (Davies 1942b:2). Income from Child Endowment was £133/16/9, annual running cost to 30 June, 1942 was £1,211/19/2, the Government subsidy was £500 plus food supplies for about 100 indigent Aborigines, and the debt of the Mission was £603/7/5. The Bishop noted the limited potential of mining and agriculture, and placed his hope in development of the cattle industry.

> Lockhart is labouring to get out of debt. Once this is cleared there is hope for this Mission becoming more self reliant, with a prospect of great development, in the cattle industry. I do not place much hope on the gold mining or agricultural activities; food supplies for local needs only can be grown, transport costs are against growing agricultural products for sale in the South (Davies 1942b:1).

Johnson was away for medical treatment from January to June, 1940, and married a trained nurse during this time (Nicholls 1940). Mary Johnson volunteered to oversee the "first-aid post which we call our hospital" (Davies 1940:194). The Johnsons were the only whites there in 1941, and indicated a good mood at that time. They were pleased with church attendances, despite the absence of a priest, and upon the birth of their daughter, Marion Ann, and return by plane, a feast and corroboree was held in celebration. Some synthesis of practice, and Johnson's tolerance, and ignorance, of Aboriginal customs are indicated in his report:

> "As the majority of the people were dressed in their corroboree dress I decided to say Evensong out in the open, and it was a wonderful sight and inspiration to behold these people, in their old heathen war paint, singing and praising God with all their heart and soul. One's mind went back to about twenty years ago when the men and women of this part of the Peninsula lived in daily fear of evil spirits, and did not know the Love of God or of His Son Jesus Christ" (Johnson 1942a:84).

In a later report, Johnson indicated his concern at the growing dependency and loss of traditional skills of the younger generation. He then encouraged use of language,

bushcraft and sea hunting, and allowed families to take extended holidays (Johnson 1948, quoted in Chase 1980:118). The reference above indicates that he too began with charismatic impact on the Aborigines due to his initial rapport and encouragement of their cultural identity.

6.3. Wartime pressures

Staff were difficult to obtain during this period and some recruits left because of the Japanese threat in 1942. One of them (probably Reynolds or Johnson) is said to have to have collected all the firearms from the Aborigines and thrown them in the sea for fear that the Aborigines would support the Japanese if they invaded, due to their involvement with Japanese on luggers in the earlier years (Chase 1980:116). Reynolds appears to have left in a panic, early in 1942: "the Rev A G and Mrs Reynolds had to come south again after only one Sunday at Lockhart River, where they unfortunately have had to leave most of the furniture and stores which they took with them" (ABM Review April 1, 1942:59). Bishop Davies sent the Rev. G Gilbert in March 1942, to relieve while the Johnsons went on furlough, but he left almost immediately, saying that the army had told him to report south. On accepting his resignation, the Bishop made a cryptic note in the Day Book for 26 May: "Accept resignation of G Gilbert and his wife. Gilbert was not wanted by Army, he as Reynolds in my opinion" (Davies 1937-42). Presumably, he meant that fear was their prime motivation, although the ABM Review noted at the time:

> the Bishop of Carpentaria has given the women missionaries in his diocese complete freedom to decide as they think right in the present crisis. ... we understand that Mrs. Gilbert of Torrest [sic] Strait, and the Rev. A. G. and Mrs. Reynolds of the Lockhart River, are on their way down. They had scarcely arrived to take up their work at the Lockhart when the Queensland Government advised evacuation of all women who could get away (ABM Review March 1, 1942:34).

When the Johnsons went on furlough for four months in 1942, the people were dispersed in two or three camps under their own control (Davies 1942c:103). The reasons Johnson advanced for the evacuation were: the exposed position of the villages, increased aerial activity at low altitudes, (the Mission was just south of the Iron Range air base), increase of naval craft along the coast, and exaggerated stories of bombings to the north. Aircraft

at night at low altitudes upset the people, who made repeated requests to go bush. Bush camping was arranged in March two main groups:

> (a) People of South Sea blood to be found close to the foreshore between the Mission House and Cape Direction. This group can be easily contacted by sea or land.
>
> (b) The remainder of the natives including the Head Stockman and the Skipper of our launch are camped a short distance inland opposite Night Island and at various waterholes or creeks between the Foreshores and the Mine at Hayes' Creek" (Johnson 1942b:1).

The Head Stockman, Joe Callope,[16] was placed in charge, and the food stocks of the Store were distributed to the campers. The Protector at Coen reported 10 Aborigines at Blue Mountain, living on bush food (Protector of Aboriginals, Coen, 1942). Chase records, however, that some small groups went to their country north of the Mission, some to the Pascoe River, and some to the Claudie River in Lloyd Bay, where they were able to glean handouts from the American and Australian troops camped nearby at the Iron Range air base. American Black servicemen "are said to have been particularly generous with food, clothing and liquor" (Chase 1980:117). The US Army Engineering Battalions responsible for constructing airfields including that at Iron Range, were composed mainly of American Black troops (Wilson 1988:32).

One Aboriginal man states that he went in a group to Portland Roads where they 'nearly starved'. They had to go a long way in search of yams and sugar bag, and they even learnt to eat 'karol' (*Dioscorea rotunda*, 'cheeky yam', an unpalatable yam-like vegetable), and cooked mangrove fruit. They were shifted to Night Island, and later to Orchid Point, where the army sent supplies.[17] It appears that an epidemic occurred during the dispersal, as Warby says that 42 died in 1942 [18] (Chase 1980:118), and Tennant refers to an epidemic during the war, when the Americans "sent down two doctors and opened a soup kitchen because they saw that the people were dying of

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16 "a Mapoon Half-caste is in charge of cattle. I have found him to be efficient" (Davies 1949).

17 Conversation with Victor Macumboy at Lockhart River, 24 April, 1993.

18 Conversation with John Warby at Rockhampton, 4 August, 1992.

malnutrition as much as anything else" (Tennant 1956:4). There is no reference to these deaths after Johnson's return on July 26.

A secret Military report by Captain Marshall in 1942, detailed serious concern at the views of station owners, Police and some Aborigines, that Aborigines would probably collaborate with the Japanese if they invaded, and their knowledge of the country and bush skills would be of immense value to them. A major justification for this was the treatment that Aborigines had suffered at the hands of Europeans.

> The aboriginal is a complex human being, not the "simple child of nature" that most people, including some missionaries, like to make out. He has a very keen sense of justice, and he knows well that he has been, and is being exploited by station people, the Government (particularly) and almost every other white man whom he contacts (excluding most missionaries). (e.g. Stations are compelled to pay adult aborigines about 30/- per week for station work, but in almost hard fact the natives get only a fraction of this sum. It is paid to the Government through the local police and the aborigine is unable to buy even an axe or a saddle without police permission (which is not given unless the aborigine has some special "qualifications") moreover, aborigines are unable to get ration tickets and so are practically without clothing at the present time (Marshall 1942:1).

The main response suggested was that station owners and missionaries should plan to take Aborigines with them away from the land they know, in the event of evacuation. Marshall criticised missionaries for having no evacuation plans, and Johnson for his dispersal of the Aborigines.

> Again, at least one has exhibited behaviour which at best can be considered irresponsible in the extreme. This missionary, JOHNSON of LOCKHART RIVER, evacuated himself and his assistants preciptiously [sic] during the recent "Jap scare" leaving all mission property, including many buildings, stores, suitable OPips, mission workshops, cattle, horses and transmitting set and motor (on TI Circuit) in the charge of one full-blood aboriginal. Most of the mission abos. evacuated down coast to a point opposite NIGHT ISLAND where the hunting was good and where they could have been contacted by the enemy at any instant.
>
> JOHNSON has just arrived back and is being assisted by Father EDWARDS .... It is possible that JOHNSON (said to be a neurotic individual) will bolt again at the slightest provocation (Marshall 1942:3).

Johnson returned with the Bishop and a temporary Chaplain, Rev J Edwards, on 26 July, 1942, and he reported on 1 August by telegram that most of the people had returned. Rather than bolt, he persevered at the Mission until 1948. Johnson was evacuated to Cairns after injuring his kneecap at Portland Roads on 12 August, and the Bishop took

over until he returned a month later (Davies 1947d). A telegram from the Protector on 18 August refers to Johnson having contacted 20 Aborigines at Iron Range, who were returning to Lockhart Mission. The Bishop expressed a surprising view of the war evacuation.

> I consider that it will be a very valuable test for the natives at Lockhart Mission, it will enable us to find out to what extent we can trust them in villages with infrequent visits from white supervisors, I have always had a dread of injuring their characters by too much supervision which tends to pauperise them and prevent initiative (Davies 1942a).

This suggests that the Bishop was concerned at the institutionalising effects of the Missions, and wanted to assess their acceptance of the habits of village-style living, in a situation of greater independence. It also suggests that he was more tolerant of supplementary subsistence production, which was often a necessity in poor seasons. Despite the re-opening of the Mission in August 1942, the population remained reduced for some time, as men were sent out for employment. During the war 28 men from Lockhart River enlisted in the Small Ships Section and operated around New Guinea. (According to Jimmy Doctor, all but two of them were Islander crew.) Others took up labouring work in agricultural and dairy industries in the Cairns and Atherton regions (John Warby 1954a).

6.4. Social unrest

Following the war, Mission life was unsettled. The Aborigines had encountered a wide range of experiences of bush living, southern employment, interaction with troops, and generally a greater freedom and independence from Mission authority. In addition, the influx of troops had made the area better known, and some individuals stayed or returned to live in the region, particularly at Portland Roads which was the port for the base. It was difficult, then, to return to the isolated character of Mission life, and the remaining years of Johnsons' stay proved to be quite stressful. The church building, which Rowan had constructed of bush materials, was burnt down during the war, possibly by a bush

fire. The school was then used for church services.[19] In September 1946, Johnson reported to the Bishop that there was an epidemic of coughs which his wife Mary suspected was septic pneumonia. There had been five deaths at that time and morale was low. It appears that fears of sorcery arose:

> .. practically everyone has gone back to what they were before the Mission started, old customs and beliefs are practiced [sic], and it is very difficult to get anyone to hospital, in fact they try to keep quiet about anyone being sick. It is quite common to find a sick person painted with coloured mud, and the old men and woman [sic] sitting round just as if they were waiting to die, and if one dies it is the general belief that the deceased has been poisoned. .... The fuss that was made over the death of the Savage boy is still spoken of, and I feel that it had and has a lot to do with the present low morale (Johnson 1946a).

Presumably, the reference to the Savage boy's death related to sorcery accusations at an earlier time. Johnson also reported a shortage of water and made a plea for an assistant, and expressed the need for a priest to address the morale problem, even suggesting that he himself be ordained. The Bishop had no Chaplain in sight, so he advised that he was sending three relief Chaplains in turn. The first was to be Francis Bowie, a Torres Strait priest with a reputation for dealing with sickness in culturally appropriate ways. The Bishop commented:

> I think that the Native Priests may be able to find out the source of the superstition that seems to be rife at the Lockhart. I know that Francis Bowie did do something of the sort on Thursday Island during the war, he did in half a day what a Chaplain had been trying to do for over a month (Davies 1946).

This comment indicates the significant pivotal role that the Islander clergy represented in bridging the old and the new, not entirely in the way the Church envisaged, but certainly in touching common attitudes concerning the causes of sickness and spiritual power.

In December 1946, Johnson wrote about an another problem of concern, that of access to methylated spirits from people at Portland Roads, which had just led to an altercation in the Mission.

> I would not have asked for assistance under ordinary conditions as I feel that I can manage alone, but as there is now nothing to prevent the men from procuring

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19 Conversation with John Warby at Rockhampton, 19 August, 1994.

> Metho from Portland Roads I am very worried about the future of this place. During the period of the outbreak, NO Police or Councillors could be found[,] all had left (so they say) early in the morning to cut timber for their houses, and quite a number of the men hid in their homes, too afraid to come out, until everything had settled down, so we were left alone, and when the men are mad with Metho it is not a pleasant situation to handle.
>
> After everything had settled down I learnt that Billy Waradoo brought some Metho with him on the Mary Lockhart, so if he is still at yours, please keep him on the island, as he will only bring more down here ....
>
> If we can keep the food stocks up I do not think the men will bother about going to Portland Roads, but once we run short, well then they will be off to get food and whatever else they can procure (Johnson 1946b).

Financial and staffing pressures were no less following the war, and this is illustrated by a saga that occurred over the procedures for witnessing withdrawals from the Savings Accounts of the Aborigines. Withdrawal from Aboriginal accounts required an independent witness to sign the returns. Johnson, however, was the only paid person involved with the administration and, frustrated by coping with it on his own, and with his wife working voluntarily as matron, he decided to make a stand against the inadequate Government support. Correspondence flowed for at least ten months between the Protector of Islanders, the Director of Native Affairs, the Bishop and Johnson, and this saga demonstrates the impersonal power and legalistic nature of legal-rational bureaucracy, in contrast to the personal interaction of traditional and charismatic forms of authority. Rather than beating futilely against the walls of bureaucracy, the Bishop attacked with similar legalism. The Bishop advised the Protector, who advised the Director, that "Mr Johnson is the only paid official on the Mission, apart from a few aboriginals, and consequently it is not possible for him to have put into effect the requirements relative to the witnessing of payments" (Protector of Islanders 1947). The Director then advised the Superintendent: "An independant [sic] competent witness should, for preference, be a white person but when such is not available, a competent native should be used and it is considered that additional to Andai Ware there are several on your Mission" (O'Leary 1947c). The Bishop responded:

> Your department asked the Church of England to undertake work amongst these East Coast aboriginals. They have granted £500 per annum regularly towards this work, this grant does not cover the salary and expenses incurred by the Superintendent and Hospital. The Church of England has found out of her own

> resources £1000 per annum towards the cost of maintaining this work. If the law demands the attendance of a responsible person as witness when money is paid out at the Mission then I must ask your department to increase your grant to £1000 per annum and it will become possible for the Church of England to increase their staff.
>
> I do not think that I am justified in diverting the energies of staff employed at the school or on cattle work for the long period that is required on the day that payments are made out to the people (quoted in O'Leary 1947d:2).

The Director rejected as an impossibility the Bishop's request to the Acting Protector to send one of his staff to the Mission each week to make the payments. He noted that relief foodstuffs to the value of £600 was also provided, and made the suggestions that the returns be accepted when the Superintendent endorses them with "An independent witness is not available", and that an officer visit Lockhart four times a year to check on the procedure (O'Leary 1947d:2-3). The Deputy Auditor General viewed this as unsatisfactory as it might cause embarrassment and disputes. "I do not consider that it would be wise to dispense with witnessing in this or any other instance" (Murray 1947). The endorsement was allowed briefly when the Bishop capitulated to the unbending legal requirements and "agreed to utilise native witnesses" (Protector of Aboriginals, Somerset District 1947). In all this bureaucratic wrangle, the underlying problems of shortage of finance and staff were not addressed, so confirming the Government attitude of the time to maintain Aborigines in marginal underdevelopment at Missions at minimal cost.

6.5. Outside influences

On top of all these pressures, Johnson faced attempts by a couple at Portland Roads to discredit him personally. Mr D and Mrs W Fisher were employing men from the Mission to cut lawyer cane, and attempted to have their families brought to Portland Roads as well. This included plans to provide a school and medical care. The Fishers had dubious reputations, and it appears that they aimed to have a ready workforce on hand that they could exploit through a symbiotic 'boss' type relationship. When their intentions were thwarted, they obtained written statements from some Lockhart men accusing Johnson of physical abuse at the Mission. A subsequent investigation cleared Johnson, but, on top of everything else, it was to lead to his resignation. The details will be outlined.

Fisher's pressures on Johnson began to develop in January 1947 when Fisher took into his care a sick man, Ben Peter, who also wished to work for him. He complained to the Director that men sent from the Mission for work came inadequately supplied with clothes and blankets, and the Acting Director requested Johnson to investigate. Fisher was keen to be an agent for their supply as part of their work agreements.

> The natives have asked me to approach you with a view to reducing their payments to the Protector and increasing their pocket money by the amount of five shillings.
>
> The dissection of the wages seemed reasonable when suggested by the Superintendent of Lockhart River Mission, but when I saw the utter poverty of their belongings, the justice of their request was very evident.
>
> Their clothing is ragged and sketchy to the extreme, many have no blankets at all, others have one or at the most two very ragged affairs which may at one time have been blankets. ...
>
> It has to be advised that their appearance and lack of essential clothing has already caused comment from members of the community here, who realise these natives are just out of a Mission (in Davis 1947).

Johnson responded to the Director that some had not requested clothes and others had been promised clothing by Fisher "as he had quite a lot of clothes at Portland Roads which he had received from the Townsville Comforts Funds people" (Johnson 1947a). Johnson was agreeable to Fisher supplying the clothes and blankets, as well as the extra money, provided sufficient was sent for support of their families. Fisher wrote next, advising that he had sent Ben Peter to Thursday Island for examination, and that James Butcher was requesting that his wife and son be allowed to join him, coming with Harry Mathers, who was going to the Mission on the excuse that his child was very sick (Fisher 1947a). At the same time, Johnson wrote to the Bishop a letter of despair at his situation.

> As matters here are becoming worse instead of better, I deeply regret I cannot carry on alone any longer, so I am reluctantly compelled to ask you for a transfer to some other position within the Diocese or with A.B.M. failing this to ask you to accept my resignation, so that I can get away before I have a complete breakdown, and then be unfit for any further work (Johnson 1947b).

Other complaints were the current of unrest in the Mission due to some arrivals sent from Palm Island, low rainfall, no means of transport, his wife and daughter's prickly heat and boils, and some possibility of losing the stockman, Joe Callope, to job offers. The Bishop replied, indicating his attempts to obtain a Chaplain, and desire to talk with him

about his difficulties at the Synod in June. He had just attended a 'Conference on Aboriginals' at Sydney University and commented:

> The difficulties revealed by others made me realise how fortunate we were and how advanced also in Aboriginal training. I have no doubt that the Reserves in Queensland are to become places of refuge for Aboriginals rather than places of segregation, and that Aboriginals may leave these reserves if they wish to. Schwartz of Cape Bedford always allowed Natives to leave the reserve if they wished to do so but he would not allow them to come back (Davies 1947a).

The Conference would certainly have involved Elkin and promotion of his positive policy towards citizenship. The bishop's openness to the dual approach then of Mission maintenance for the present, and dissolution in the longer term, would reflect his concerns about the dependencies of the Mission environment.

Meanwhile, Fisher had gained the endorsement of the Protector of Islanders for his plan for families of workers to come to live at Portland Roads, and Johnson sent an urgent telegram to the Director for confirmation. The Director replied:

> Provided Fisher prepared provide sustenance and suitable accommodation wives and families no objection them going forward but children of school age should remain mission for schooling stop ensure natives going forward suitably equipped clothing etc. (O'Leary 1947a).

This advice gave Johnson the means to delay action, and he advised Fisher that the wives could go forward, but children had to remain for schooling, and, as they had to be equipped, and, as clothing supplies were not available, but expected, they could not go immediately. At the same time, Johnson wrote to the Director with concern at his advice.

> I am very surprised to learn that you have confirmed the authority of the Protector of Islanders in granting the boys [sic] request, as you have most likely overlooked the fact that Portland Roads is within the Iron Range Mining Field, as from this Field as well as Wenlock Mining Field natives, particularly females have had to be brought into the Mission by the Police for their own benefit (Johnson 1947c).

Johnson forwarded copies of the correspondence to the Bishop, noting that Fisher had been on the staff at Palm or Fantome Island, while his wife had been at Portland Roads before the war as Mrs Evans. The Bishop also wrote to the Director, again to confront him in bureaucratic style, to make the point that the Mission has no dormitories for school age children. He posed two solutions – either send the children to a Mission with

dormitories, or provide funds and salaries to build and staff dormitories at the Lockhart River Mission (Davies 1947b). This letter drew an immediate response by telegram to the Superintendent to cancel any arrangements to transfer women and children to Portland Roads. In a follow-up letter, O'Leary further reveals his lack of subtlety in assessing the implications of departmental decisions. He referred to the Protector's advice that Fisher was employing 20 men and was prepared to erect a school at his own cost, obtain a teacher for the children of any employees, and also maintain and accommodate the wives and children. He then requested Johnson to go to Portland Roads to investigate the proposal, and advised that the Department would agree to a recommendation from the Bishop for the transfers of women and children to occur (O'Leary 1947b). The Bishop replied that he was not in favour, and astutely raised an issue of the exploitation of the women which had not been considered.

> Portland Roads is a place that I would consider it most undesirable for female natives to reside at. Many of the former prewar population is living there whose record with natives we know and there is no police station nearer than Coen, about 80 miles away. I do not know Mr & Mrs Fisher, Mr Fisher is now employing 25 Lockhart River Men, can you tell me if he wishes or will employ these men's wives and families in basket, mat & fan making for his own profit and if so at what rate he is to pay wages?
>
> I am sorry that I am not able to instruct Mr Johnson to inspect living quarters for Natives outside the Reserve. He has no jurisdiction, he cannot spare the time and such patrols would necessitate an increase in our staff at the Mission which we cannot afford. I am sure that it should be a government official who inspects such quarters.
>
> ... if we are to disperse the Natives again as Mr Fisher suggests it would be a reversal of government policy with regard to Natives in this area and it would need the sanction of the Minister (Davies 1947c).

The tensions of this time affected Johnson's relationship with the teachers, and Undai Ware was transferred to Moa Island. The Bishop regarded Kitty as the better teacher, but did not offer her a position (Davies 1947f). Miss A Hann, teacher at Moa Island, who was to go to Yarrabah, accepted the position at Lockhart River Mission instead (Davies 1947g, 1947h).

Fisher had now begun his campaign of vilification of Johnson. Several Aboriginal men signed witnessed statements (in standard English) about Johnson. Willie Kanora stated

that Johnson beat a sick woman with lawyer cane, and flogged two altar boys in the church. Jack Temple claimed that Johnson let Mr Carlson (a prospector) take food from the Mission store at night. James Butcher stated that he belted Old Man Giblet with a walking stick, and that Matron Johnson belted a small boy at the Hospital. Ben Peter claimed that Johnson had flogged him with a leather belt when he was in hospital aged sixteen, and that his sister became pregnant to Johnson (Kanora et al 1947). Subsequently, Ben Peter signed a statement at the Mission, recanting his accusations.

> I feel no good because I write lie, but tell Magistrate it is true because I been proper fright the time he ask me about it.
>
> When I go Portland Road from Sophie because I sick, Willie Kanoora and Sammy Normanton speak me, and say you write what you know about Mr Johnson because we want to get him away from Mission and I say where you get nother man and they say o we find one, so I think about it. Then I get drunk and make myself silly, and write the letter, and then give it to Mr Fisher, and he write another letter and I sign that letter while Mr Neal there, and Mr Fisher say he send that letter for me.
>
> When I want drink I give money to Ted Densley and he buy town rum from Mr Fisher and we all drink, Sammy Normanton, Harry Mathers, Willie Kanoora, James Butcher with me, and when I silly from drink I write letter (Peter 1947).

The Bishop accompanied the Magistrate to the Mission for an official investigation. The Director later endorsed the Magistrate's report with the recommendation "that it be "accepted completely as valuable evidence of misstatements by certain people and in indication of the good management and control on the Mission" (in Hickey 1947). The Bishop also sought action from the Coen Police in regard to the supply of liquor at Portland Roads. The lawyer cane supply finished in September 1947, and in October, Fisher had a debt of £534/17/6 for Aboriginal labour (Davies 1947j; Protector of Aboriginals, Somerset 1947).

6.6. Mary Johnson

When the transfers were initially approved, Mrs Fisher wrote to Johnson with a list of names of wives to send with children (D Fisher 1947). Johnson, however, had been evacuated sick to Thursday Island, and Mary Johnson replied that she could not send any more families due to the Director's telegram just received (M Johnson 1947a). Mary Johnson wrote two letters to the Bishop, the first enclosing cuttings from the North Queensland Register on the Fisher enterprise and also a tender notice for the disposal of

the RAAF buildings at Portland Roads which the Fishers were occupying. She was now the *de facto* and voluntary Superintendent, and had to discipline some people after 'Johnno' left. Her next letter showed considerably more frustration and anger.

> I am in receipt of your telegram. Yes I will hold on to my husbands [sic] position until Father Fisher arrives as Joe Callope is not keen on the responsibility. I think it is a disgrace to expect any woman to hold her husband's position when he was taken out sick through over work. I only hope if Father Fisher Mr Seabrook or Father Bennie get sick you don't expect their wives to hold their posts.
>
> As for staying on after Father Fisher arrives well I'm not. I've had enough abuse & cheek from these people to last me a lifetime & I have to go where my daughter can get some education as I don't get time to teach her & the teachers here are not competent and their ideas are obsolete (M Johnson 1947b).

Bishop Davies was spurred to write to the Chairman of ABM with a strong plea for a Chaplain, complaining that the *ABM Review* was giving no attention to the need which Lockhart had suffered for over six years, or that Mrs Johnson "carried the Mission on by herself for the five weeks that her husband was in Hospital" (Davies 1947i). He also wrote to the Director seeking that the subsidy for Lockhart Mission be increased by £400 per year: "for work at the Hospital, I wish to pay Mrs Johnson for her services and to increase the payment to the Half-caste Native woman who assists her at this Hospital" (Davies 1947k). The Director supported this to the Under Secretary, and a grant of £250 was made for the remainder of the financial year. This may have helped the Johnsons to stay on until they finally resigned on 25 July 1948.

6.7. Review of the Johnsons' time

Johnson was a practical man with a good regard for Aborigines, and a long term commitment to the aims of the Mission. His sincere and dedicated efforts were thwarted, however, by the underlying financial pressures, lack of adequate staff support, and the destabilising influences from outside. The period of bush living in 1942 and the great influx of army and airforce personnel, broke the strength of Mission control, and, following the war, Johnson became reduced to holding things together as best he could. The under-resourced Mission was unable to have any positive direction, and the Aborigines responded with a degree of social anarchy and lack of direction themselves.

The legal-rational authority of the Mission was considerably weakened by the lack of resources and lack of charismatic vision. The narrow legality of the Government bureaucracy exacerbated this situation. Traditional authority had already been undermined and was inadequate to recover ordered living. While Mr and Mrs Johnson were significant *individuals* in the situation, their individuality was overwhelmed by the circumstances, and their relationships with the people suffered, with the result that they lost the confidence of the people and legitimacy for their authority. The Aborigines responded with lack of respect, lack of co-operation, and antisocial behaviour. The outside influences posed a dilemma for the ideals of the Mission. The Church hoped to produce model Christian citizens with self-sustained living. Something of this was achieved at times while supported by the paternal structure of the Mission, good relationships and good seasons, but at the same time, Bishop Davies, at least, was aware of the dependency syndrome this caused. He wanted them to be capable of leaving the Mission environment, but at the same time, wanted to protect them from exploitative influences. The social unrest was also a symptom of the entrenched underdevelopment, which can be attributed largely to the minimalist attitude of the Government in its funding and reliance on Mission support to protect and contain Aborigines in marginal isolation from European capitalist development:

> Reserves were hopefully advocated by protectionists to provide strict segregation from alcohol, opium and venereal diseases. The reserve system as an answer to the problem of Aboriginal demise could only prove successful, however, if the governments which ran them ensured therein the provision of proper medical treatment, hygienic care, a balance [sic] diet, education and some kind of concentrated adaptive training to allow natives to cope with the bewildering and newly dominant culture of Queensland. And this they did not do (Evans 1976:93).

In practice, this still applied in 1948, and Mrs Rowan's comment of a decade earlier was even more apt: "they ought to be ashamed of themselves to keep on the control of these poor creatures" (Rowan, Le P 1938:2).

6.8. The Mission labours on

The Revd A E Biggs arrived as Chaplain on 20 July 1948, and, following Johnson's departure (he finally left on 1 November), he became the acting Superintendent as well (Register of Services entries; The English Carpentarian, No. 13, 1949). He came from

Tasmania and Bishop Davies noted in the Day Book: "suitable for this post, would cause difficulties in a white parish. I do not think that Tasmania will take him back" (Davies 1949a). This comment reveals a problem faced by Missions. Few clergy or lay members were prepared to face the poor conditions of Mission service, and of those who did, some did not fit well or had personal problems. While they usually did not last long, their service was not helpful to Mission relationships or aims. A typical response of such people is to withdraw into activities of their own and minimise contact with the people. Biggs spent much of his time digging an underground water tank (see below).

Mr Arthur Briggs, who was transferred from Moa Island,[20] was appointed Superintendent as from 1 March 1949 (Under Secretary 1949; Briggs 1949a). Reports reveal him to have been a cheerful person, a carpenter by trade, who began with practical enthusiasm. He set about replacing the windmill and trying to recover abandoned tools and farm machinery. His letters are cheerful and the main attention of his time appears to have been that of getting the cattle work better established. His early comment that the Mission needed a much larger vessel than the *Mary Lockhart,* was rebuffed by the Bishop as unrealistic and beyond their capacity to operate. Briggs asked the Bishop for his advice on the people's request to have councillors (Briggs 1949b). The Bishop's reply reveals the expectations of Councillors.

> Yes it is a good thing to have Councillors, there have been in the past, but I think they were abolished because they did not do their job. Councillors only receive a jersey and trousers annually and some tobacco each week, it is an honorary job like aldermen at T.I. They are the persons who see to it that houses are kept clean and in order and that the sanitary man does his job and that the people do work in their own gardens, they report to you delinquents and you order police to arrest such persons for trial before you and Councillors. I hope that you can instil some sense of responsibility into the people. COUNCILLORS also check up on meat distribution, this we usually give free (Davies 1949b).

The Councillors were clearly meant to be functionaries of the Superintendent in the implementation of the Mission policy of resocialisation and discipline, and the effectiveness of their role would have depended on the strength of legitimacy accorded to

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20 Conversation with John Warby at Rockhampton, 19 August, 1994.

Mission authority, and this in turn would have depended substantially on the level of charisma of missionaries or at least good personal relationships between staff and people. The Councillors, appointed or elected, were the indigenous instruments of legal-rational authority, and as such helped to supplant traditional authority in community living. Failure to carry out their duties was a passive form of resistance when conditions and relationships were poor, or when their duties conflicted too much with cultural forms of behaviour.

Bishop Davies left the diocese in the second half of 1949, and his successor, the Rt Rev Wilfrid John Hudson, was consecrated Bishop of Carpentaria on 21 September, 1950 (The English Carpentarian No. 16, 1950). Arthur Briggs contracted tuberculosis (Tennant 1959:51) and left in October 1950 after only eighteen months service. The Chaplain took over the administration of the Mission until Mr John Warby arrived in April 1951 to take up the Superintendency (Carpentaria Association 1952:24). During a visit to the Mission in 1951, Bishop Hudson confirmed 13 candidates on July 1, and dismissed the Rev A E Biggs on July 3 (Hudson 1950-52). The new superintendent considered that Biggs was ineffective in his work. He spent much time single handedly digging a 14,000 gallon underground water tank behind his house and carting the soil to make a culvert over a creek (Warby 1951:1). Lined with concrete, the tank did not retain water. [21] The Rev Sagi Ambar was appointed acting Chaplain: "until a white priest offers. We can ill afford to spare Fr. Ambar from the Torres Strait Mission but Lockhart is so isolated there must be a priest there" (The English Carpentarian No. 20, 1952). The appointment of John Warby as Superintendent in 1951, heralded a new era in the history of the Lockhart River Mission.

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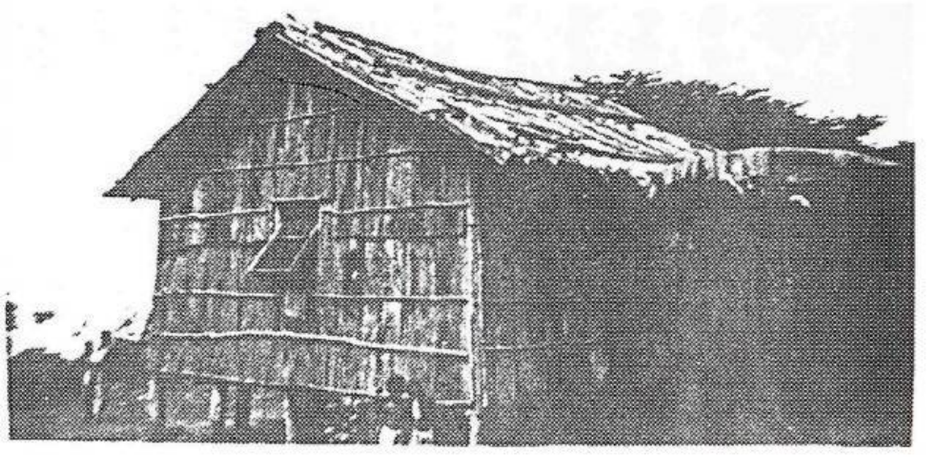
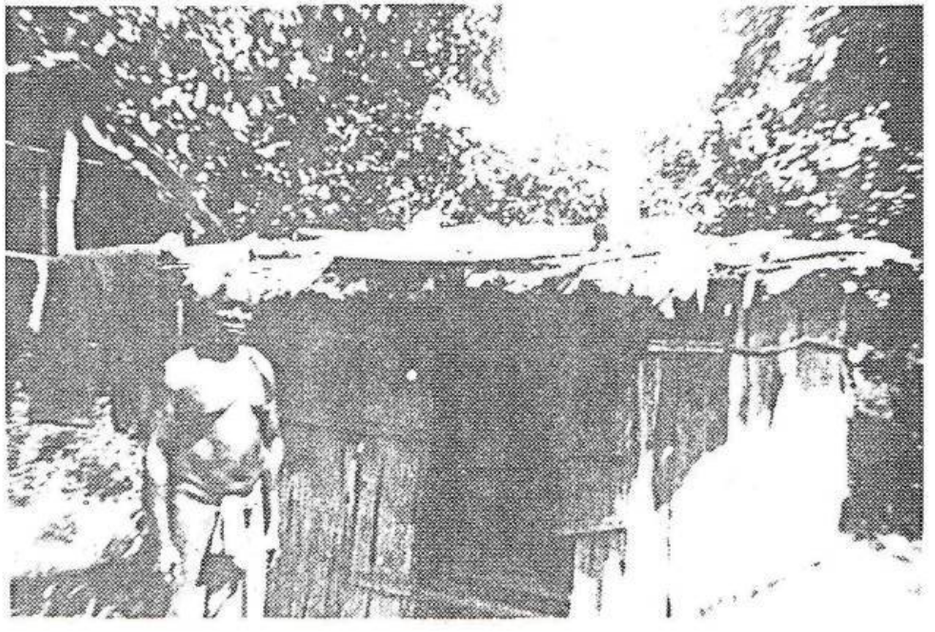
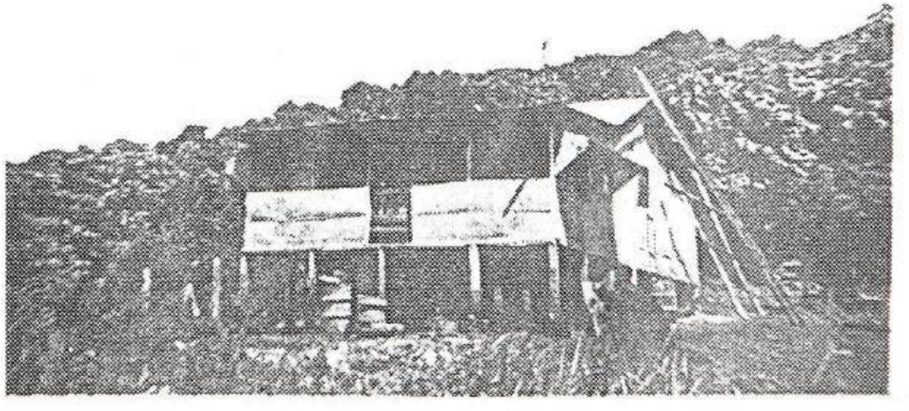
21 Conversation with John Warby at Rockhampton, 19 August, 1994.







7. The Co-operative Era – 'Warby time'

'Warby time' was a time of new vision and new hope at Lockhart River Mission. Government policy was now turning towards assimilation as the way forward, and the Churches began to win greater allocation of funds to improve living standards and to develop projects in the Aboriginal Missions. The key stimulus for new direction at Lockhart River Mission came from the charismatic leadership of John Warby. He came with practical enthusiasm and with compassion to overcome the poor health and living conditions of the Aborigines. With a background in the pearling industry, he had a vision to develop self-support through independent operation by the Mission in the trochus shell industry. His approach endeavoured to lift the Aborigines from their status as cheap labour in the luggers to that of business partners in a community enterprise. He also worked hard to improve financial support and living standards, and to unify the Mission community. A visit by Rev Alf Clint inspired him with a vision of greater independence through the formation of a Christian Co-operative. With extra vessels and staff support, the Co-operative became established and functioned effectively until trochus shell prices dropped. The Co-operative, and the charismatic authority of Warby's person and leadership, brought new life and vigour to the Mission. However, this radical departure from the capitalist periphery towards what some regarded as a socialist semi-periphery required significant management support, and once financial difficulties were experienced, the confidence of key supporters was lost, and alternative avenues of income were but dreams without the backing of substantial capital. The Chairman of the Australian Board of Missions, Frank Coaldrake, actively supported the Co-operatives to the extent that much of the direction and control shifted from the Diocese to the ABM office in Sydney, and this led to tension between the Bishops concerned and Coaldrake.

7.1. John Warby and new beginnings

John Warby operated a pearling business in the Torres Strait before taking up the position of Superintendent at Lockhart River Mission. Pressed by Archdeacon Bennie to

take up the position, he first went to visit the Mission late in 1950. He was touched by their situation of "malnutrition, wretched huts, runny noses",[22] and decided to accept. He moved there in April 1951, after his wife had given birth the previous month. He came to a run-down settlement with inadequate housing and poor health, including cases of TB and endemic hookworm. All able-bodied men were away from the Mission employed on trochus luggers, while the people at the Mission existed on Mission welfare and some hunting and gathering (Eley 1956:106). The men were typically away from their families "for almost a year at a time" (Warby 1954a). Church and Government funding was still inadequate, and so a double approach was taken by Warby and Bishop Hudson. Firstly, Warby set about to transform this situation by building up an integrated and healthy Aboriginal community, and by establishing an economic base through a local trochus shell industry. Secondly, the Bishop supported this development and began to request substantially increased funding from both the Queensland Government and the Australian Board of Missions. A new attitude of support is evident in O'Leary, the Director of Native Affairs, who facilitated both the funding increases sought, and a detailed investigation into the future potential of the Mission and its location.

During March 1951, Warby wound up his business, and the diocese bought the cutter *Cape Grey* from him "as a trochus boat for the financial benefit of LRM" (Diocese of Carpentaria 1951). The Mission then ended outside employment and began employing men to dive for the shell on improved wages. Warby's Annual Report for 1951 portrays a dramatic turnaround of purpose and activity in the Mission. The vegetable gardens were replanted with sweet potato and pumpkin (which suffered from the dry year), 200 head of cattle were purchased from Mitchell River, the cutter *Mary Lockhart* was slipped and its engine reconditioned, efforts were begun to improve the water supply with the purchase of two windmills and water pipe, and improvements and repairs to the housing

22 Conversation with John Warby at Rockhampton, 19 August, 1994.

stock begun. Senior boys from the school were involved in the maintenance work of the Mission, while the girls were active in sewing and handcrafts (Warby 1954a).

The Mission was still in debt, and the Bishop wrote to the Director of Native Affairs, not only requesting an increase in the annual grant from £750 to £2000, plus continuance and a medical grant of £375, but also that this increase, and similar increases for the other Missions, plus a new item of £1500 for administration, be made retrospective for the current year.

> My predecessor and I have endeavoured to carry on the missions in a reasonable manner with church funds and government subsidies but these together are now totally inadequate to meet the extra cost of foodstuffs, labour, floating plant etc and the mission funds are depleted to such an extent that most serious consideration has to be given to the future of the missions.
>
> It is my aim, where such a position may not now exist, to have the missions placed on a satisfactory footing to give the aboriginal residents the opportunity to progress as the Government and the Church expect them to; without the necessary funds, however, such planning is impossible (Hudson 1951).

7.1.1. Mission potential investigated

O'Leary supported this submission, noting the discovery he made, after the Bishop had made Diocesan accounts open for perusal, that the Missions had debts to the Bank totalling £10,000 (O'Leary 1951a). The increases in grants requested were approved, but the Government directed special attention to the health of the children at Lockhart River, and the future potential of the Mission. The Thursday Island Hospital Board was assisting the medical work, and, after discussion with the Bishop, O'Leary sought approval for the Deputy Director, Mr P Richards, and Mr S Stephens, a Horticulturalist from Cairns, to examine the agricultural, pastoral and horticultural possibilities (O'Leary 1951b). Richards' report emphasises the difficult access, the poor standard of buildings, absence of millable timber, lack of an adequate water supply, and limited potential for agricultural and cattle development. He expressed doubt about dependence on the trochus industry due to the wide fluctuations in prices, and overall, he strongly recommended removal of the Mission to another site which would overcome these limitations (Richards 1951). Stephens' report gives more detail. The limited arable land,

much of it suitable only for hand cultivation, and the restricted water supply, were major obstacles. "In any event the majority of the men do not appear to evince much interest in manual field labour" (Stephens 1952). The more suitable land in the Lockhart River plains was considered at risk from flooding. At that time, however, the Government was not prepared to consider the cost of relocation of the Mission to another site. O'Leary stated:

> The reports are nor particularly re-assuring but as is the case with Yarrabah Mission, removal of the Mission cannot be considered from the financial aspect and the only alternative is to endeavour [to] increase productivity and living conditions generally to a standard equal to that being arranged at Yarrabah Mission (O'Leary 1952).

This decision was to compromise their resocialisation aims, and lead ultimately to entrenched underdevelopment in the Mission. O'Leary quoted the Bishop's concurrence with his view of the Mission, and his statement that "it remains our responsibility to make the best use of the present site for the benefit of the natives there". He recommended an extensive building program to build Aboriginal and staff houses, a dining room and kitchen to allow provision of meals for the children, a kitchen and laundry for the hospital, and a kindergarten room. Extra provision was requested for the salaries of an agriculturalist and a carpenter. To fund the children's kitchen and dining room and kindergarten, he recommended that £1000 in the "East Coast Fund" be drawn upon to provide Sydney Williams huts, materials and furniture. "This fund is built up from deductions of the earning of Lockhart River Mission workers for provision of amenities for the people" (O'Leary 1952).

7.1.2. Comprehensive developments

Warby reported that the substitution of home employment for outside employment improved both home and church life. "Full home employment seems to have aroused a dormant spirit of self respect and enthusiasm as our men turn their labours to the benefit of the mission and themselves" (Warby 1953). The people had responded to his charismatic enthusiasm and personal involvement in the reality of their daily lives by accepting his Boss-patronage and vision for their future. Poor health and housing conditions were tackled by relocation of the Mission village as recommended by Dr

Barnes in 1952, by a hookworm control program, and by building the children's kitchen to provide them with supplementary meals. The relocation of the Aboriginal village from behind Bare Hill to the sea front represented a significant shift in social relationships. The original three sub-villages had be combined into the 'old village' in 1948 (Chase 1980:118), but from Rowan's time, the Mission staff were housed on the sea side, completely separated from the Aboriginal huts further away out of sight.[23] Warby's approach was to build an integrated Mission village on the sea front, with new houses of improved standard including timber floors, a store, school, church, hospital and recreational facilities. The change of location, and integrated living, indicate that Warby's style of leadership was from alongside rather than above. This enhanced both his charismatic type of authority, and also the enthusiastic acceptance of the people, which is represented by the building of a large new church building in six weeks:

> Practically all men women and children combined to erect a new church, on which work commenced early in June last, working with an enthusiasm and determination to finish the job by St. James Day which was very heartening to see. On the people's own initiative their lunch time of 1½ hours was shortened to ½ hour, and during the last week, all men voluntarily worked at night, sometimes until after midnight (Warby 1953).

It is evident that the Aboriginal response to Warby's leadership and levelling of relationships, displays aspects of spontaneous *communitas* (c.f. Turner 1969:140-50) in the egalitarian enthusiasm for the task at hand. The spirit of unity and legitimation of Warby's authority were maintained to a significant degree through legal-rational structures that incorporated Aborigines in responsible leadership and partnership, together with Warby's ability to maintain charismatic leadership, until financial and social problems began to overtake the Co-operative. Warby was respected because he "worked among the people".[24] He also encouraged cultural expression in dance and song, not only the popular Islander dance, but also traditional forms including the Bora initiation dances, providing storage under his house for secret equipment [25] (Tennant

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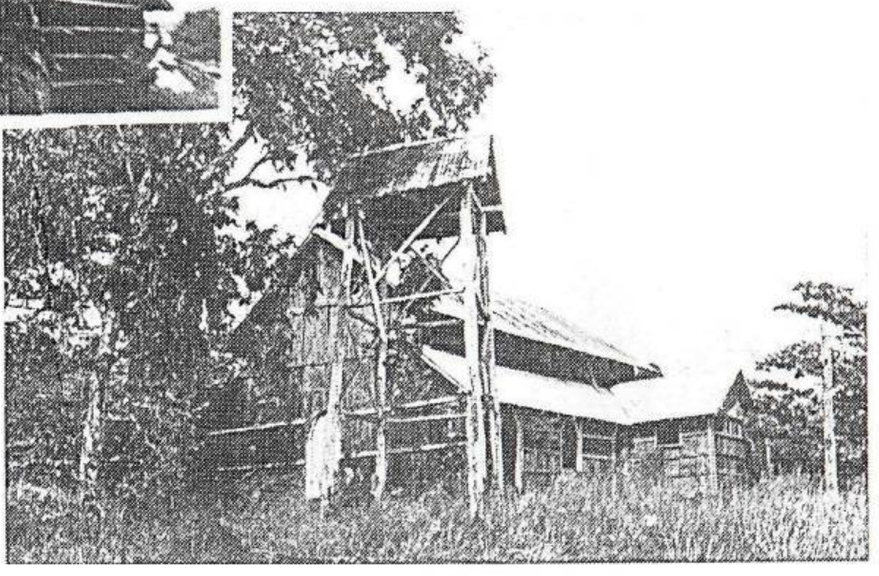
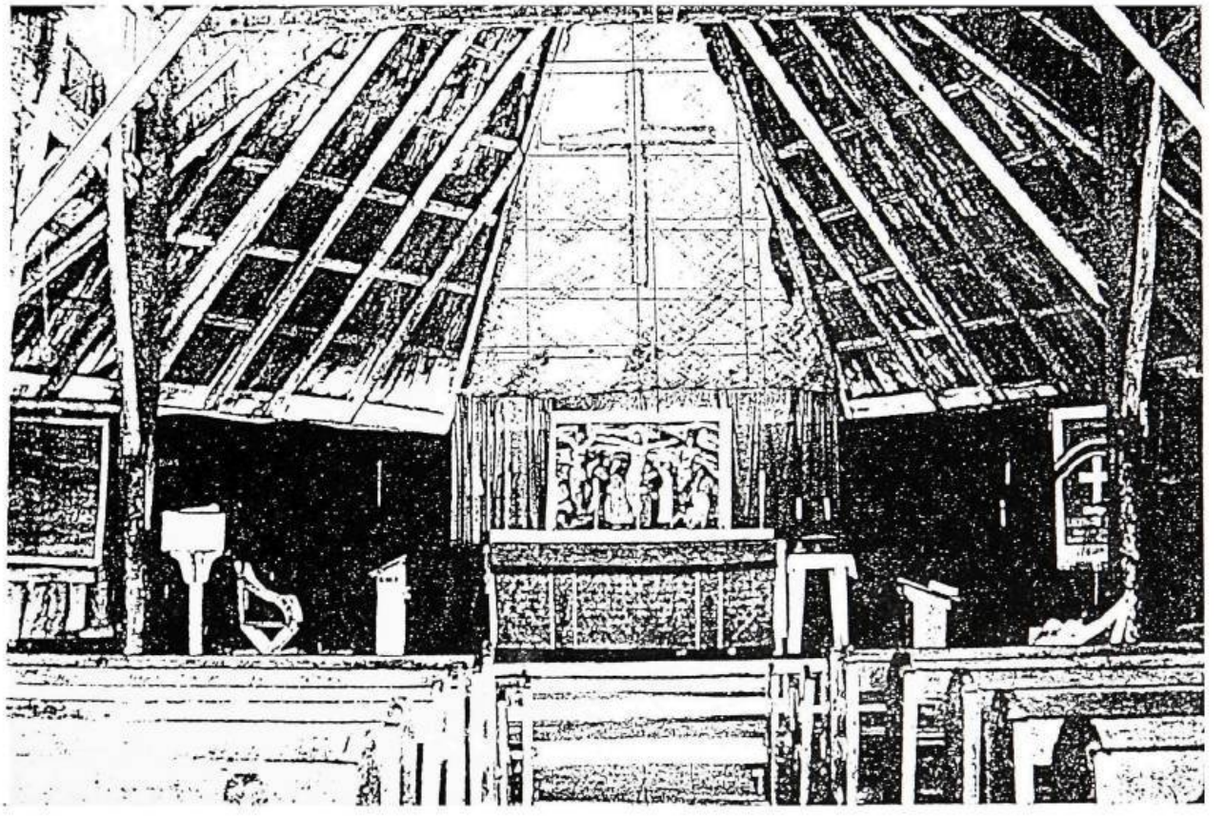
23 Conversation with John Warby at Rockhampton, 19 August, 1994.

24 Conversation with Isaac Hobson at Lockhart River, 22 June, 1992.

25 Conversation with John Warby at Rockhampton, 4 August, 1992.





1956:7; 1959:75-80). Supplementary hunting and gathering was also accepted, and the people had bush holidays for two weeks at Easter and three weeks at Christmas. [26]

In 1952, trochus shell prices fell, but Warby changed the work from a waged basis to a share system based on 50/50 co-partnership of workers and Mission, and good results were achieved. In 1953 the share split was 60/40. A further development of this enterprise took place in 1953 when a second and larger vessel, the *Yola*, was purchased. It suffered serious engine trouble in 1954, however, and the *Cape Grey* also required maintenance, but these costs were covered (Warby 1954a). In 1953, the management of the boats was made the responsibility of elected Administrative Councillors:

> This was done so as to train the Councillors to manage trochus boats entirely on their own in the years to come. Though making mistakes, it is pleasing to record that the councillors are showing initiative and imagination under this stimulus and that they are responding well to this new responsibility (Warby 1953).

Paddocks were established for the cattle work, and in 1954, three Cattle Councillors were also elected. The agricultural efforts were limited, however, due to the lack of an agriculturalist and the poor water supply. The two new windmills were installed and some water pumped, but further improvements were made by damming Cutta Creek about 2 miles from the Mission to provide adequate water to pump. As the pipeline needed improving, Warby took the enterprising step of purchasing the old telegraph line from Wenlock to Portland Roads in order to retrieve its 3 inch pipe posts for this purpose. This project, including water reticulation to the houses, was completed in 1956 (Warby 1957a:36). The dam and an irrigation system, enabled the establishment of vegetable gardens at Cutta Creek (Warby 1954b). These efforts illustrate his innovative capacity, and his ability to make do with whatever materials that lay to hand. The store system was also changed from a credit system to cash purchasing. Warby expressed the optimism of the time in these words:

> The people of Lockhart see a new era opening before them, shining with the riches of a fuller, freer life, and they are convinced that it lies within their power to prove

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26 Conversation with Isaac Hobson at Lockhart River, 22 June, 1992.

> that the glow is no false daen [sic], but the true way, God's way of life. ... It is by such ventures as these that Lockhart River Mission is rising to take its place in the fore of aboriginal missions to-day and the people of Lockhart River know it and welcome the opportunity of proving themselves, an opportunity long denied them (Warby 1954a).

Warby came to commitment to the Christian Faith as an adult, and as a layman, brought a practical emphasis that lay in the 'Affirmative' side of mission emphasis, but not in a way divorced from the 'Devotional' perspective.

7.1.3. New Staff

The rapid growth of staff numbers, with the assistance of ABM, was a great contrast to the time of Johnson's lone leadership. Ross Matthews, the Diocesan Secretary, was appointed Agriculturalist and Assistant Superintendent in May 1952, but died through sickness after only two weeks. A European Chaplain, the Rev N J Eley, replaced Fr. Ambar in October 1952, and a Pacific Islander, William Namok, was appointed as carpenter to guide the house building program. Mr Pat Taylor arrived as Engineer in January 1953, and married Sister Doris Brown in June (Diocese of Carpentaria 1953b). The Taylors had left by the following year to take up gold prospecting at the Wenlock (Tennant 1959:72), and new staff appointed in 1954 were Mr Garnet Pidsley, Engineer, his wife Elizabeth, Kindergarten teacher, Mr Bill Ewin, Agriculturalist (Carpentaria Association 1954) and Sister Hazel Conn (Carpentaria Association 1955). Relations among the staff were not always smooth, however. Some felt that they had to define the limits of their role in order to cope with Warby's enthusiasm for staff to work to his direction and to the limit as he did.[27] Others had personal problems or did not perform to the Superintendent's satisfaction (Warby 1955a:2; 1955b:5). Elizabeth Pidsley encapsulated the missionary's experience of adapting to the situation and winning some acceptance and social change by saying, "You adapted, they adopted".[28]

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27 Conversation with Garnet Pidsley at Townsville, 26 October, 1991.

28 Conversation with Elizabeth Pidsley at Townsville, 26 October, 1991.

7.1.4. Government and ABM funding

Meanwhile, in 1953, Bishop Hudson again requested a substantial increase in funds from the Government. Warby and Hudson were now taking a different approach from previous years. Instead of limiting activity to funds available, they were allowing and anticipating substantial deficits, and expecting the Government to cover them, as transpired. The deficit anticipated for Lockhart River in 1953 was £1,500, and the Bishop again requested that the extra funding be made retrospective to 1 July, 1952.

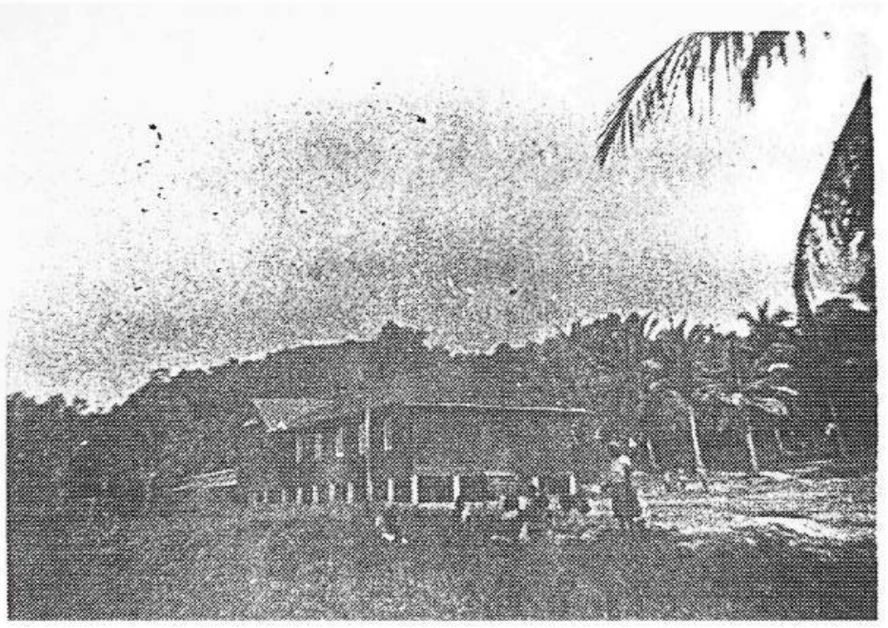
> It is my desire – and I know this to be in accordance with Government policy – that the standard of living of the Native Peoples should improve not only in the matter of diet but also regarding such matters as housing, medical, sanitary and hygienic amenities and the production on the Mission reserves of more home-grown foods (Hudson 1953).

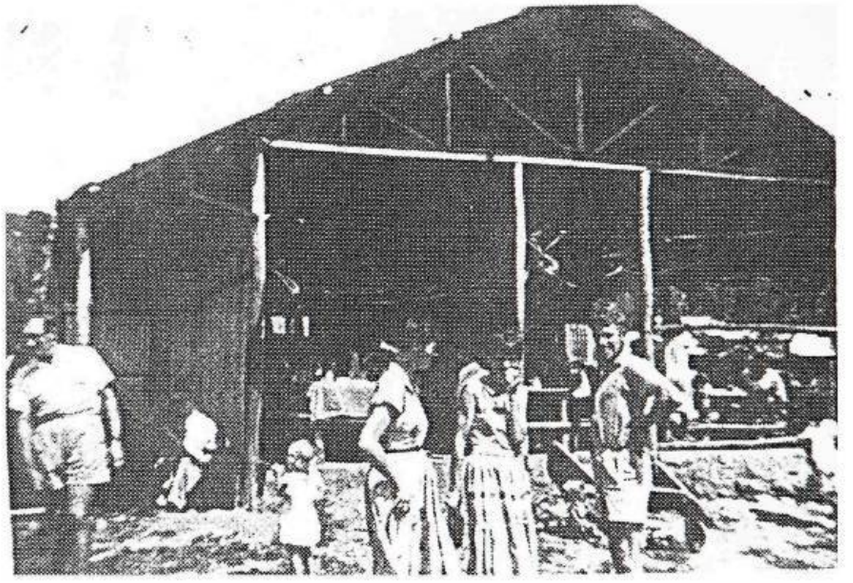
His requests were approved (Under Secretary 1953), and an additional grant of £900 was made for house roofing iron, with £450 taken from the East Coast Fund and the remainder from the Thursday Island Vote, Assistance to Missions. Arrangements were made also to send timber from Cherbourg for the emergency need of a teacher's house (O'Leary 1953). The grant from the Australian Board of Missions was an improved £2,600 in the year 1951/52, with the same again in 1952/53 (Diocese of Carpentaria 1953a). In the following year a more modest increase of £700 was requested of the Government, and in a Cabinet Memorandum, the Director's supporting comments were noted.

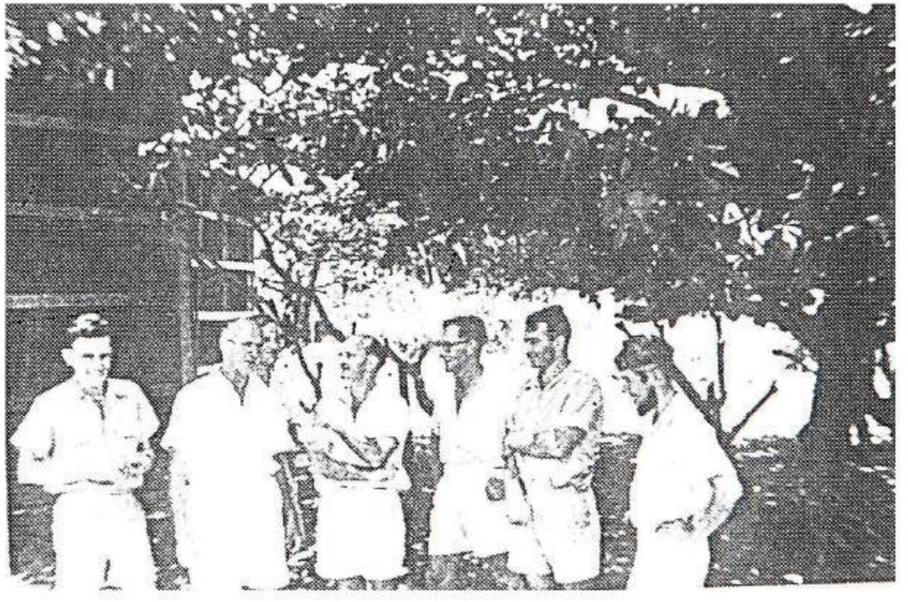
> It is felt that the application by His Lordship is fair and reasonable. His organisation is one of the Missions that is endeavouring to implement the Department's policy of self-maintenance with the assistance from Government subsidies and Mission earnings. A very considerable amount of improvement to such end has been undertaken (Qld Cabinet 1955).

7.1.5. Child care

Warby was against dormitories, but instigated a comprehensive care program for the children, in order to combat malnutrition. Several Aboriginal women were employed under the supervision of Sister Hazel Conn to provide the children with two meals 5 days a week (plus supper if they wished) as well as iron and vitamin supplements. Eventually the children were supervised in taking showers before school, and school clothes were sewn and washed at the Children's Centre (Warby 1956:54, *Report of the Director of*







Native Affairs, 30 June 1956, p. 54; Diocese of Carpentaria 1956-1957:35; Tennant 1959:56-57; Currie, 1961:19). Warby was moved emotionally by the undernourishment of children at the Mission and faced the same dilemma that previous Superintendents had faced – the choice between rapidly improving their condition by intervention or by a slower process of working with the parents in their primary care responsibilities. Warby chose the former and combined it with measures to intensively resocialise the children to European values of personal cleanliness:

> It is part of the policy of the Mission not to revert to the dormitory system for children. It was obvious, however, that the system whereby children were left entirely to the parents except for schooling was also lacking in various ways. A compromise was sought, and the children's centre is the result of this (ABM Review, October 1, 1955:151).

While the parents may have accepted this benevolent care for their children, and five mothers were rostered to help each day,[29] the ultimate control and decision-making were out of their hands. In this respect, it was counter to Warby's aim to increase self-respect and self-reliance in the people. The parents did not own the values imparted and the underlying different cultural approach to child care continued from the past into the future years, i.e. a permissive approach to child nurture persisted, and the expectation that children fend for themselves much more than in European practice. An authoritarian successor of Warby, 10 years later, observed the lack of effect of the Centre on home conditions, and noted, "there is some doubt that the material advantages provided by the Children's Centre outweigh the disadvantages of loss of home training and discipline" (Currie 1961a:3).

7.2. Formation of the Co-operative

In the 1950s, the Australian Board of Missions, following experience in Papua New Guinea, set up its own Department for Co-operatives with the Rev Alf Clint as Director. He visited Lockhart Mission for three months in 1953, and talked to the workers each morning about the Co-operative Movement. He saw its principles of democracy, equal

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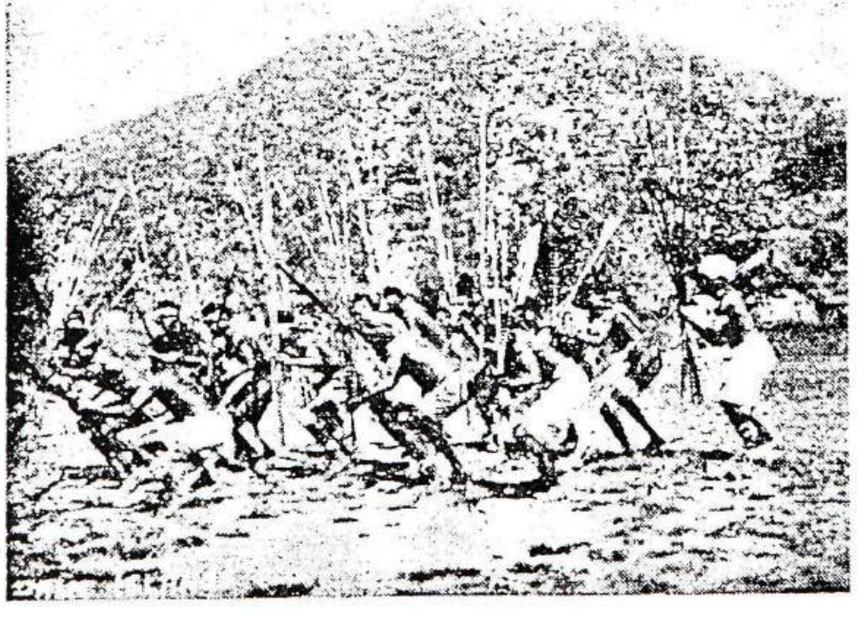
29 Conversation with Isaac Hobson at Lockhart River, 22 June, 1992.

opportunity and benefit, to be the ideal means to build on Warby's approach, and the people responded to his advocacy. On 25 August 1954, the Lockhart River Aboriginal Christian Co-operative was enthusiastically launched, with five Aboriginal directors elected, and two appointed by the Bishop (Eley 1956:106; Warby 1955c:54-55; ABM Review October 1, 1954:153). As a young man, Clint had attended a Socialist Christian Conference in England in 1938, and was involved in the Christian Socialist Movement in Sydney (Tennant 1959:97-8). Reports show the socialist underpinning of the Lockhart Co-operative, which was superficially linked to co-operative aspects of Aboriginal society. There is some recognition of the difficulties in transferring small-scale Aboriginal sharing in family groups to the level of the new institutional community as a whole, in an editorial report in the ABM Review, which romances the Co-operative as an ideal way to advance evolutionary development.

> The transition from a nomadic way of life to village life is an enormous step for a primitive people, and it can scarcely be a success unless the people concerned can find some new way of living. The Australian aborigine has passed from the stage where he must be treated as a sick man needing care : he has now passed to the stage where he must be helped to his feet. Yet he must be taught to fend for himself in such a way as it will not involve treading upon his brothers, but rather learn to live for the good of the community as a whole. The world generally is beginning to learn this slowly and painfully. By teaching the co-operative way we are helping the aborigine a right way from the beginning. It is not the only way, but it is a good way—it means living for the community and the common good (ABM Review October 1, 1954:153).

Warby does not express this evolutionary tone in his writings. He is revealed as a practical man who accepted Aborigines as equals, and has great confidence in their capacity to take responsibility, and to share his vision of communal development. He describes the general aim as : "To instil initiative and to foster a sense of responsibility among all sections and ages of the people in general and in individuals and young people in particular with the aim of increasing their self respect and self reliance" (Warby 1955d:1). He summarised the methods used, putting the spiritual emphasis first in the Church report, and last in the Government report. A strong 'Affirmative' emphasis is evident:

1. By fostering an active interest in activities based on the church.
2. By improving living conditions and material benefits.
3. By providing employment for all able-bodied men within the mission.
4. By teaching the people to run their own co-operative business.
5. By creating a voluntary night school for adults and school children.



NATIVES DANCING AT LOCKHART RIVER.

6. By delegating responsibilities to as many people as possible and at all times encouraging the people to think for themselves and to make their own decisions (Warby 1955d:1).

7.2.1. Developing the Co-operative

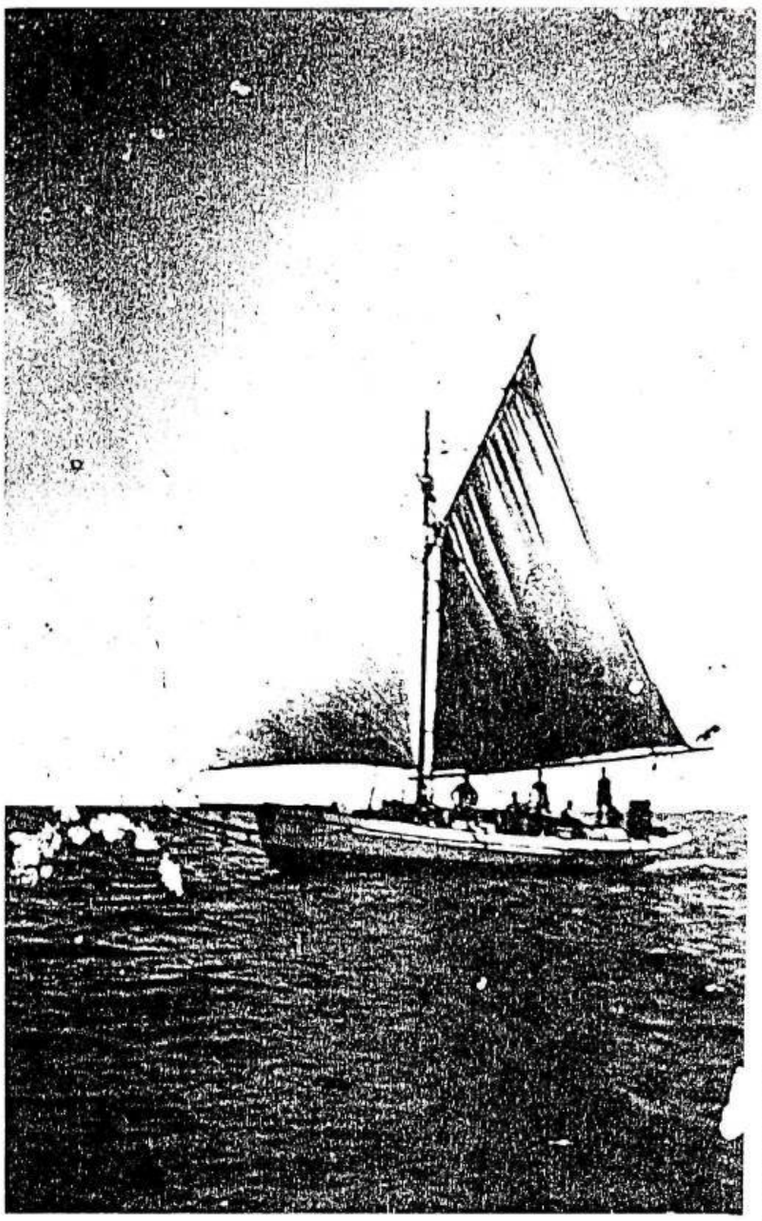
With the advent of the Co-operative and its Board of Directors, the duties of the Administrative Councillors became related to the management of mission life and participation in local court cases under the Superintendent (Warby 1956:55). Warby hoped to include the cattle work in the Co-operative (Warby 1954a), and requested Government help with a further investigation into the pastoral and agricultural potential of the Mission. A visit was made by a Horticulturalist, D O Atherton, and a Husbandry Officer, J N Shelton, in November 1954. Their reports are a little more optimistic than the previous survey reports, particularly with the efforts being made to improve the water supply from Cutta Creek. Atherton recommended that some cultivation of grain and fodder crops could be attempted by fencing an area in the Nundah flats, but improvements should be made to the road from the Mission, and an experienced agriculturalist and a tractor with a dozer blade were essential (Atherton 1954). Shelton noted the aim to give responsibility to Aboriginal Cattle Councillors, but felt that they were too inexperienced on their own and needed the support of a white cattle manager. He also recommended extensive fencing and tick control, and that additional horses and bulls be obtained (Shelton 1954). The Government supplied funds for a tractor, but a cattle manager was harder to find, and good possibilities did not eventuate due to "the dirty black shock which constitutes the cattle Manager's residence" (Warby 1955b). A young, single man, John Kaines took up the position in April 1955 (Warby 1957b).

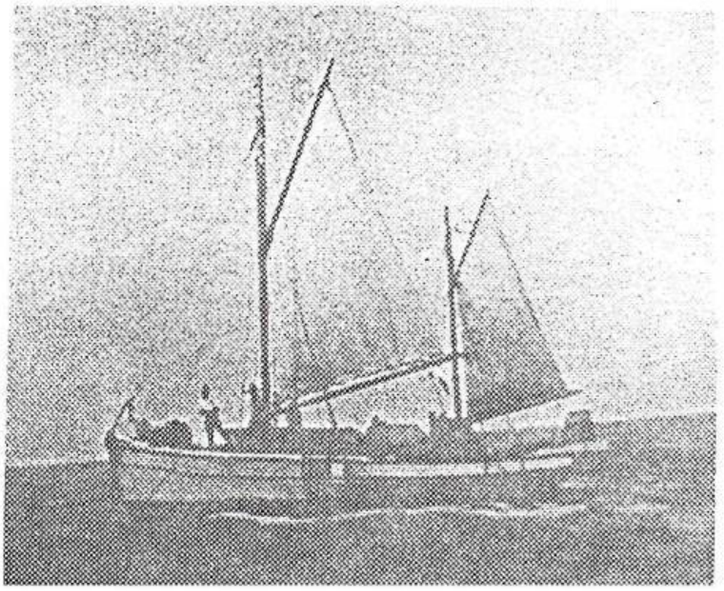
The community emphasis was expressed in church aims as well. "The ideal of the Church in any community is to be the unifying, integrating force within the community. To do this it must be prepared to enter the life of the people at every possible point and level" (Eley in Warby 1955d:1). Four Church Councillors were also elected, a lay reader licensed, a branch of Mothers Union formed, and boys were servers in church services.

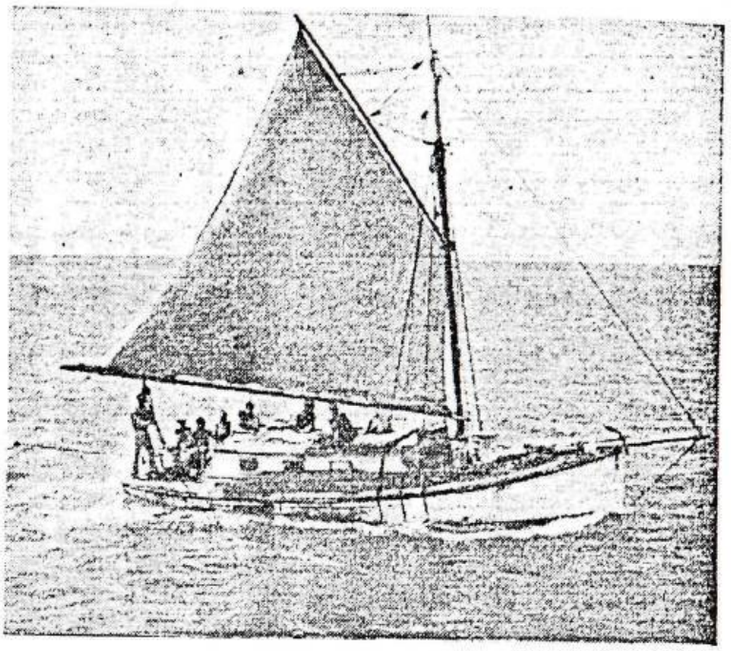
Fr. Eley supported Warby and helped with teaching in the night school. Eley's role provided a balance of 'Devotional' and 'Affirmative' in the Mission.

The agenda of John Warby to develop the Co-operative approach became overtaken to a large extent by the agenda of Alf Clint to establish Co-operatives in all the Aboriginal Missions on Cape York Peninsula, including the Presbyterian and Lutheran Missions. To achieve this end, he proposed establishing a Training School at Lockhart River Mission and offering scholarships for people to attend from other Missions. In a letter to the Director of Native Affairs, he claimed to have established an Adult Co-operative School and External Studies Section, and that "we aim to make Lockhart River an advanced training Centre for the Aborigine people. That our scholarships will be extended to include all aborigines who desire Co-operative and Technical training" (Clint 1955). Clint was raising scholarship funds from trade unions, co-operatives and ABM, and requested a grant of £2000 from the government for this purpose. O'Leary was wary of this development because he also received from Bishop Hudson indications of plans for extensive buildings for the Training School at a total cost of £40,000 (O'Leary 1955). Clint also approached the Queensland Treasurer in 1956 (Walsh 1956), and the grandeur of his plans may have contributed to the Government's reluctance to assist when difficulties were experienced in the Lockhart River Co-operative. Clint's dream of a training program was to be met, not at Lockhart River, but in the establishment of the Tranby Training Centre in Sydney in 1958 (Coaldrake 1957). The Director of Native Affairs was also somewhat put out by a laudatory article entitled 'Miracles at Lockhart' by Eley in the ABM Review of July 1956.

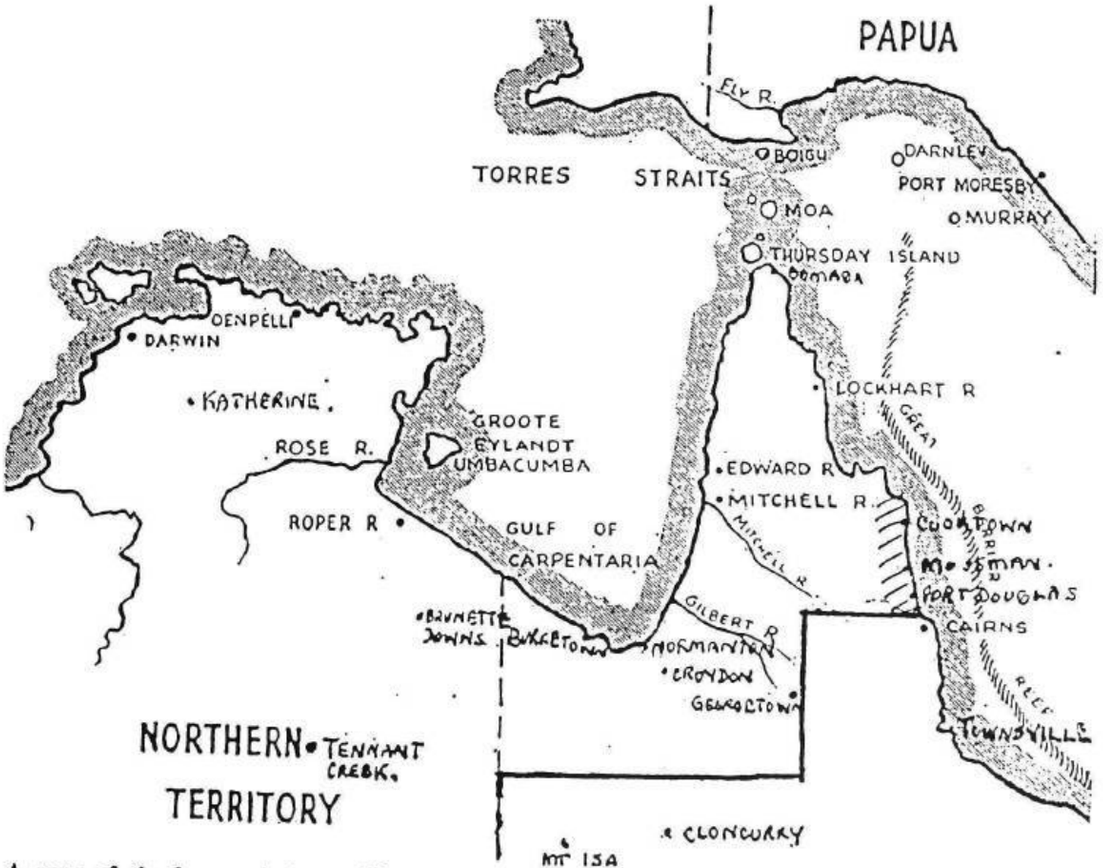
> It is quite evident that material progress on this Mission has occurred since His Lordship Bishop Hudson took up the position of Bishop of Carpentaria. Although such is not mentioned in the report the Queensland Government has contributed very largely and continues to do so for the advancement of the people of this Mission. The co-operative development is being given credit for all advancement but it has not yet succeeded in reducing the Government's annual contribution of £3,200 towards feeding the indigents of the Mission and £5,700 annual assistance to the Mission (O'Leary 1956).







THE LUGGER "MARY LOCKHART."
"In fifteen months the business had expanded to the extent of owning three boats."



A map of the large missionary Diocese of Carpentaria. The three Aborigine Mission Stations referred to in the text, Edward River Mitchell River and Lockhart River are marked.

7.2.2. Aboriginal perspective

In 1956, the Chaplain, the Rev John Goodman, who replaced Jim Eley in October 1955, edited a local 'Lockhart River News', and the third edition contains some Aboriginal perspectives on the activities of the time. Billy Brown, a Director, reflected on attitudes to the Co-operative and indicated the burden of leadership.

> I would like to tell you a news of the co-operative. First of all, the new way of Life has been shown to us, from then we are still carrying on. Some of us are trying hard in the way which is the Co-operative way, but most people of this mission do not really understand this new business way, but this I mean we must obey what our leaders say, and always ready to do what is told to us. Now in six months, our boats have but only one ton each. That is since February. This is something we must all think about. What are we going to do. We are going to build up or fall down, where we were before all those things started. We must think and try to set out in our minds what is best we can do to build up for our people (Brown in Goodman 1956:1).

Jimmy Doctor also wrote as skipper of the *Francis Pritt*, and as a Director of the Co-operative.

> The board talked about the boats, how we are going to get our shell and work our boats this year. It is very hard to shell now and we are going to try our best to swim hard. So that we may be able to build up our Co-op and capital. Another thing each boat must aim for so many tons, as some of the crew are in debt. Some of the boys are not in debt. And please try to remember everybody, do not even try to get clothes from the store if your husband or son has no money. Our boat is waiting for engine, and some little jobs to be done. That is why we never go out, and everything is finished now, so we might try and get some shell before St. James Day, and if we are out please try to help us, pray to God, and ask Him that He might answer our prayers and give us a good load before we come back (Doctor in Goodman 1956:7).

Nancy Powloo exhorted the women of the Mother's Union to work together to prepare for the Church's festival day.

> I am sorry to tell you that our Mother's Union do not seem to look forward to work and help each other. The members are dependant [sic] on their church, sometime next week we are going to start our work making the altar cloth and the mat for our church, for St. James Day July 25th. So we must all understand what this mothers union means, now so that we must all think very hard, understand very clearly what it is for us to do the best to help our husband, children, old people, and some other people too. Also our staff here and ourselves. When the Altar cloth and mat are finished, we must try and think always that we are not working for ourselves or other people but we are working for God and the Church (Powloo in Goodman 1956:2).

While the Co-operative was flourishing, hopes were high, and a high community level of co-operation was achieved, but as problems developed with boats, shell became more

difficult to find, and incomes dropped, the weakness of this level of co-operation emerged. The missionaries drew a parallel between Co-operative democracy and Aboriginal cultural obligations to share. This was also seen to be a logical extension of Christian teaching (Eley 1956:109). Kylie Tennant expressed the common but simplistic view of Aboriginal sharing in her popularist book on this period of Lockhart's history: "The Australian aborigine, in his native state, was a natural born co-operator. He hunted for his group, not himself. What a man brought in did not necessarily belong to him. The catch was shared" (Tennant 1959:16). In practice, co-operation is not universal in Aboriginal society. At the community level, there is a view of Lockhart as 'one people', but only in relation to outside groups and influences. At this broad level of contact there is only a low level of obligation to share along marriage lines. Chase distinguishes five levels of social organisation at contemporary Lockhart, the closest equivalent to 'tribe' being the third level, the dialect group. Within a dialect group there are closer ties and obligations between those with descent links to land in adjoining 'countrymen' estates. The closest ties are between those with descent rights to the land and resources of an individual estate (Chase 1980:202ff).

Co-operation and obligation across these various levels of identity are varied and complex. During Mission history the five or so dialect groups (Thompson 1988b:2-4) coalesced into two distinctive and competing groups known as *yiipaalu* and *kungkaalu,* north and south. But the major focus for co-operation and sharing occurs within the smaller 'countrymen' groups. The sharing of knowledge and resources among such countrymen is proportional according to the closeness of kin relationships within that group. A lesser level of sharing then goes out to a wider range of people related through marriage (Chase 1980:218-277). Clearly this process of sharing is neither equal nor democratic, and this further illustrates the endurance of deep-level cultural attitudes in Aboriginal society. The potential conflict with the aims of the Co-operative was hidden in the first few years by the enthusiasm engendered by Warby and other support staff, and the viability of the trochus shell industry. However, the change from wage labour to

business partnership brought heavy bureaucratic responsibilities of management and accounting, which were beyond Aboriginal experience, and were the most difficult aspect of the transition. This meant that John Warby's oversight, and his wife Bunty's role as treasurer of the Co-operative were crucial to success (Warby 1955c and 1956). Verhelst notes of Co-operatives:

> ... collaboration does not function well unless it is based on traditional solidarity and not simply on economic profit. This is why so many co-operatives have failed in Africa. They are not natural extensions of traditional mutual aid. They differ fundamentally from the latter in that they aim to introduce a solidarity based on mere material interests and not on a natural solidarity. Such natural solidarity may be based on birth, on co-residence, or on membership of the same religious movement (Verhelst 1990:27).

Chase reports Aboriginal expectations that riches would come from the system of shares, and when this did not happen, some felt that money was being misappropriated (Chase 1980:123). This would have been exacerbated by the bonuses and share issue of June 1956, just before disasters that began the decline of the Co-operative:

> The first audit of the Co-operative was held as at 30th June, 1956 and this revealed that a profit of £5,396 had been made since the formation of the Society. A dividend of 7 1/2% was paid to full members, and also a bonus of 50% was paid to all members whether fully paid up or not. These payments greatly stimulated contributions to share capital by members. From the formation of the Society to 30th June, 1957, the L.R.A.C.C. had donated over £4,200 to the finances of the mission (Warby 1957a:33).

When Warby left the Mission in 1960, he withdrew his original investment of £100, and this may have been misunderstood. [30]

7.3. Decline of the Co-operative

By 1957, the Co-operative was under pressure on several fronts. In October 1956, the *Francis Pritt* sank, and was a total loss after sustaining damage on a large rock. Then, in the following month, the *Mary Lockhart* was swamped at Cape Direction with a heavy load of timber, and sank. It was recovered, but the engine required complete overhaul again (Warby 1957a:33, 35-6; Tennant 1959:92-5). Then demand for trochus shell

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30 Conversation with John Warby at Rockhampton, 24 August, 1992.

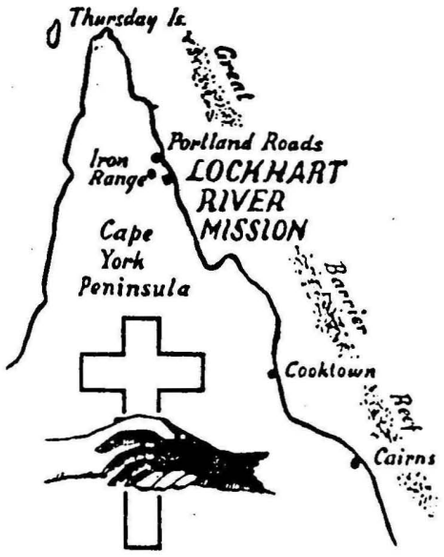
began to collapse as the plastics industry emerged. This led the Co-operative into financial difficulties at the end of 1957 when Co-operative members had been paid for a large quantity of black lip shell before it was shipped to Thursday Island, but then the buyer failed to meet the payment of £1800 to the Co-operative (Diocese of Carpentaria 1960a). The looming crisis affected the whole Mission operation:

> The Co-op Store is going splendidly but this also will be forced to close unless we get financial relief SOON, because this store uses the same capital as the marine department. Not only that, if the people earn nothing from shelling, there is no money to spend in the store. In other words they will be unemployed but without the dole. The mission will just have to feed them in return for work done around the place, but even the mission cannot afford to do this! Not on our present completely inadequate grants. This looming tragedy must be diverted even if it cannot be prevented. This co-op has come a long way in three years and it must not now be allowed to fall flat on its face at this juncture. Hence the urgency to commence new industries (Warby 1958b).

Frantic efforts were made to find alternative industries for the Co-operative (Warby 1958a, 1958b), but significant obstacles to agricultural, timber, cattle and marine enterprises were the lack of capital and staff, high freight costs and southern competition, cattle duffing (Tennant 1959:60), and lack of power and facilities to hold perishables such as crayfish. Lockhart was also hampered by poor anchorage and difficult access by road and sea, being about 60 kilometres from Iron Range airstrip and further from Portland Roads wharf. The elderly and widows gained pensions in late 1959 (Warby 1959a), but others had to depend on their own resources. Warby foresaw that the receipt of pensions would mean a minor revolution in the Mission, for it meant that pensioners would receive £4 to £5 a week, while young working men were give 7/6 to 15/- a week plus tobacco, food and clothing. Warby expected rations for the aged to cease, so that cash would have to be laid out to stock the store for their cash purchases, pay in kind to workers should cease, and there would be pressure to increase wages (Warby 1959b). This did not eventuate for some years, however, as pensions allocations were made to the Mission, and the old system of rations continued (O'Leary 1960; Currie 1961a).

7.3.1. The influence of Frank Coaldrake

The new Chairman of ABM, Frank Coaldrake, became interventionist in his relationship with Warby and Clint, and wrote directly to Warby and government officials. While he



Lockhart River
Aboriginal Christian
Co-operative Society Ltd.

Registered Office:
LOCKHART RIVER MISSION
Diocese of Carpentaria

Air Mail Address:
LOCKHART RIVER MISSION
via Iron Range, N.Q.

Surface Mail:
via Cairns, N.Q.

Products:

Trochus Shell
Blacklip M.O.P. Shell
Rare Shells
Oars
Seed Cotton
Aboriginal Weapons and Curios
Handicrafts
Reptiles

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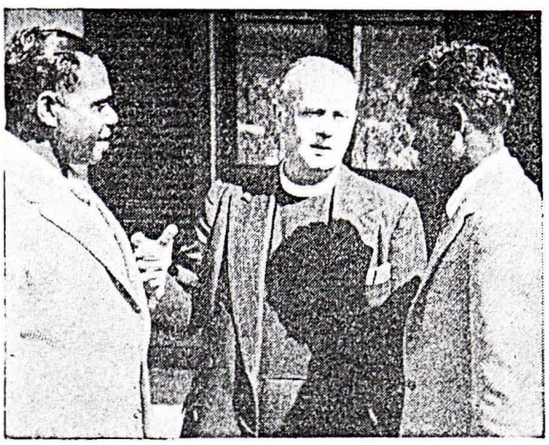
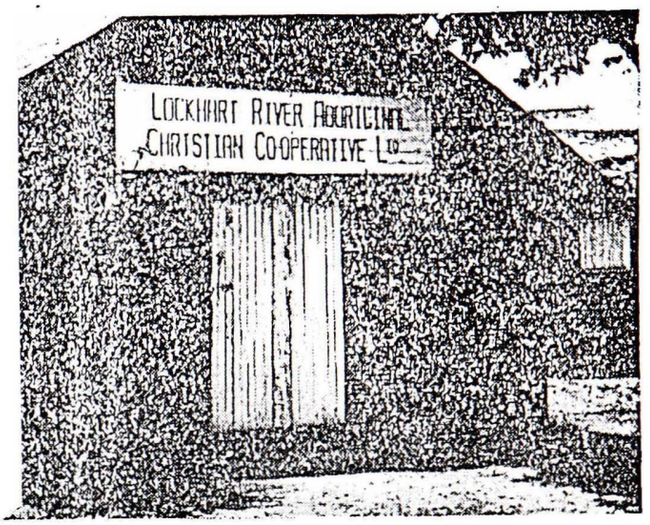
Consumer Store



THE REVD. ALF CLINT



THE CO-OPERATIVE OFFICE
"Opportunities for initiative and ambition."

BILL BROWN.
Secretary of the Co-operative Society at Lockhart.

Missionaries being sent out by the Church are pictured in St. Andrew's Cathedral with the Primate, the Chairman of A.B.M., and the Chaplain of the Training College. The Primate has just commissioned them and is presenting New Testaments. The training of missionaries is one of the Board's responsibilities, and even when budget funds run out, this essential service must continue. Legacies have helped prepare men and women for a lifetime of service.

acknowledged the position of the Bishop of Carpentaria, this practice tended to sideline and divide the structural authority of the Bishop. This was later to cause a division between diocese and Co-operative within the Lockhart River Mission. Coaldrake involved his father-in-law, W H ('Rocky') Williams, as a geologist in assessing the mineral potential.

Considerable effort and heartache went into attempts to gain the right to exploit minerals on the Reserve, including small gold finds. The Queensland government, however, had granted mineral exploration rights to BHP, which had first claim to any significant finds (*The Sun*, Brisbane, 3 December 1958; *Courier Mail*, Brisbane, 5 January 1959). The Government supported the mining companies and would not acknowledge any Aboriginal rights, even moral, to minerals (Evans 1957; Brown 1957). The capitalist might of the mining companies was far more attractive to the government than the peripheral efforts of small Aboriginal Co-operatives. The Mission sought and gained permission to work the small Warramunga gold lease near Buthen Buthen, and requested a establishment grant of £5,300. This included the cost of a Landrover (Warby 1957c). An examination of its prospects by W H Williams, however, concluded that "the prospects are not encouraging and that as a co-operative project the Woolanmunga [sic] Gold Mine should be eliminated from further consideration" (Williams 1958a:3). More promising finds of gold were made by two Aboriginal men in Alpha Creek and the upper rises of the Lockhart River, and Frank Coaldrake of ABM sought authority for the Co-operative to prospect (Williams 1958b; Coaldrake 1958b; Under Secretary 1958). Protracted negotiations with the Department of Mines, the high capital expenditure they required, and the problems of keeping the Co-operative solvent, finally made exploitation impracticable (Under Secretary 1959, 1960; Coaldrake 1959a, 1960a; Williams 1961:5).

7.3.2. Reserves under threat

In 1957, the loss of reserve land for bauxite mining at Weipa was a shock to the Churches. It was now realised that Reserves were simply Crown land under another name:

> It has always been understood that once a reserve was "proclaimed," it could not be touched for any purpose. Apparently this is not so, and any government can wipe out the agreement at will (ABM Review, December 1957:166).

Warby wrote to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition with questions to raise in Parliament about Government policy and the threat to Aboriginal land and rights. In his reply, the Minister, Dr. Noble, claimed that he had consulted with missionaries and Aborigines at Weipa, defended development of the north, and asserted the assimilation policy.

> The long range policy of the Government, and, in fact, of all people interested in the care, protection, and development of our Aboriginals is the final and complete assimilation of the Aboriginal into the community. ... Both from a humanitarian, as well as a national point of view, it is essential that our native peoples be not kept forever segregated as interesting museum pieces (Noble in Lloyd 1957).

7.3.3. Financial crises

At this time, Bishop Hudson faced wider financial pressures. In June 1957, he applied for an increase of funds for Edward River only, but by August he had discovered that all the Missions had incurred large deficits, totalling £14,965 (Hudson 1957a, 1957b). The deficits arose from losses in the Mission Stores, high boat maintenance costs, increased salaries, house building and maintenance (Hudson 1957c). The Director was critical at the poor management and the request for a special grant of £18,000 plus a 25% increase on the previous year's allocation, and he trimmed the increase to £14,600 (O'Leary 1957). In 1958, the diocese still had a deficit of £7,000, and, with further deficits foreshadowed, the Bishop was forced to make further pleas for government assistance, this time stressing the demands of the assimilation policy.

> I have taken steps to curtail expenditure but I am of the opinion that it is not possible to work the Missions on the income available on the lines which have now become necessary if the policy of working towards Assimilation is not to be abandoned (Hudson 1958a).

The Director supported his basic request for £11,384, but in the following two years, funding was below that requested by £8,500 in 1958/9 and by £10,000 in 1959/60 (O'Leary 1958a, 1958b, 1959a). Bishop Hudson was critical of both Government and Church levels of support.

> One of the great difficulties which we in this diocese have had to face – and are still facing – is the inability of the Church of England in Australia either to send us

> sufficient trained missionary staff in the way of priests, teachers, nurses, farmers, mechanics, etc., nor to give us enough money to pay the very low stipends these missionaries receive. Our troubles do not arise only from the inadequate help received from the Government but also from the apathy of the Church (Hudson 1959).

With this pressure upon him, Bishop Hudson was quite terse with Warby, in April 1958, about his efforts to find new sources of income.

> I am sure you cannot undertake, cattle, cotton, crayfish, crabs, cypress and cows co-operatively or contrariwise all at the same time – not even with the capital contributed completely or consecutively as time goes on. You would need an enormous staff which you cannot house and the whole organisation would become unmanageable.
>
> I refuse to go on spending what we have not got in the hope that we shall be got out of the hole somehow. If the Church wants to go on doing things in this way, they must find another Bishop of Carpentaria. (In fact that problem would soon solve itself because this one would be in a state of mental malady or moribundity in a very short time as things are going now) (Hudson 1958b).

At this time the Queensland Government became critical of the achievements of Church Missions, but strong defences were made, and the abysmal underfunding of Missions was revealed when it was admitted in parliament that a takeover of Church Missions would cost the Government 1¼ to 1½ million pounds a year (*Courier Mail*, Brisbane, 7 November 1958; Coaldrake 1958a).

The Warbys experienced internal opposition to the Co-operative from some Mission staff, and Clint expressed his concern to Coaldrake.

> I am not happy about staff relationships at L.R. I believe faults are on both sides : Some people have gone and <u>are</u> going out of their way "to gun" for John Warby and I feel there must be a breaking point. ... Imms [Registrar] information and reason for visit to L.R. was based on staff reports from L.R. – a private report has been prepared by him to present to the Bishop on his return. .. He is trying to get control of the Co-op in the name of the Bishop (Clint 1958).

Coaldrake was careful in response to requests from Warby for funding, stressing the formalities of Co-operative resolutions, and that practical conditions had to be evident for the success of the projects (Coaldrake 1959b). Warby, however, remained hopeful, despite the odds.

> You will be glad to know that we have planted about 38 acres of cotton and this has struck very well and is now a few inches high. We are under considerable pressure

> here Rocky from the mechanical point of view, and will be extremely glad when, if ever, an engineer arrives. What with boats, trucks, Land-Rovers, stationery engines, tractors, ploughs, cultivators, water supply, etc. we are like a dog chasing its tail, frantically repairing something only to find that something else has broken down. .... I feel that this will be a good year for us with all industries gradually coming good, but perhaps this is only an old man dreaming dreams and not a young man seeing visions (Warby 1959a)!

The Bishop was aware at this time of some talk, "though not from official quarters, about the Government taking the responsibility of the Missions from the Church and simply permitting the Church to have Chaplains there" (Hudson 1959). In eight years time this would become a reality. At the Diocesan Synod of 1959, the usual formal motion to congratulate the Queensland government for its enlightened funding of Missions, was lost by an overwhelming majority, and a modified motion was passed which expressed both thanks and urging it to provide much greater grants. Motions by the Bishop and Warby regarding Aboriginal rights to wealth from Reserves, tenure of Reserves, improved education, and the supply of staff by ABM were also carried (Diocese of Carpentaria 1959).

7.3.4. ABM and Government review visits

In September 1959, three representatives of ABM, the Chairman, the Treasurer, and the Dean of Rockhampton Cathedral, S J Matthews, made a visit to the Diocese of Carpentaria for a fortnight, and the Chairman, Frank Coaldrake, made a comprehensive report to the Board. This report deplored the state of missionary quarters and conditions, and made provision for housing funds and improved conditions of service. On the financial side, an arrangement was made with the diocese for the ABM to act as their agent in negotiating the level of grants from the Queensland government to complement their own funding. A clear distinction was also made between the Church's responsibility to support pastoral and spiritual management, and the Government's responsibility in education, health, agriculture, town services and supplies, housing, industrial development, administration and welfare. Despite this distinction, it was proposed to set up the cattle work on the three Aboriginal Missions as a Company, and to establish Co-operatives at Mitchell and Edward River Missions. It was optimistically

expected that these bodies would ultimately take over financial management of the Missions, and that the church congregations at each Mission would be developed into self-supporting parishes (Coaldrake 1959c).

Dr. Noble, the responsible Minister, also visited the region at the end of September, spending two nights at Lockhart River Mission. In his report, Dr Noble stressed both the Government's long term policy of assimilation of Aborigines in the white community, and also the tired, oppressive view of what Aborigines must do.

> There is no argument against the fact that the Queensland aboriginal must adapt himself to these things which constitute the civilisation of the white if he is to survive and become a useful member of the community in which he finds himself. That is the path which must he trodden by him and that is the path to which he must reasonably be kept by us consistent, of course, with his psychology, mentality, industry, and capability of assimilation (Noble 1959).

The Director of Native Affairs recorded discussions of the party with the Directors of the Lockhart Co-operative, and noted:

> the impression gained was that the native Directors of the Co-operative had been indoctrinated to the extent that all they needed to do was to ask the Government for money to assist in the establishment of industries which the Co-operative administration was incapable of implementing.
>
> That this particular Co-operative is incapable of functioning in the interests of the people was exemplified during the visit. Confirmation of that was gained from Rev. F. Coaldrake and Mr. Gregory, Accountant, Australian Board of Missions representatives during the conference with the Honourable the Minister of the 20th instant. ...
>
> Therefore, unless something more practicable under the headings of these industries listed above is received direct from the Australian Board of Missions, it is not possible to recommend any assistance to them (O'Leary 1959b).

These comments indicate the over-optimism of Warby, and signalled the ultimate death-knell of the Co-operative, for the Government now perceived the Co-operative as a sinking ship which it would no longer bail out.

7.3.5. Social problems

Underlying all these external difficulties was the disparity between the Aboriginal understanding of sharing and motivation, and Co-operative principles. According to Chase, there were group resentments at work in the Co-operative (Chase 1989:123), although

this is denied by Warby.[31] Tennant's account (quoting Clint) of the Director's inquiry into the sinking of the *Francis Pritt* suggests some lack of enthusiasm and unity. "The Directors gave the men a pretty hard time. They'd left that boat when they had orders to stay aboard" (Tennant 1959:93). The unmarried crew members had been left aboard to pump out leaking water overnight before repairs could be effected the next day.[32]

Drinking alcohol caused problems from time to time. Hobson[33] states that methylated spirits was stolen from the hospital, store and staff houses, and people would send money with boat crews to buy wine and spirits from miners at Portland Roads. The miner, Ted Densley, used to drink with them and taught them to drink methylated spirits with milk, cordial or water, also flash burning it in a tin before mixing it. Staff and policemen would check the boats for alcohol. Many did not understand the financial workings and difficulties of the Co-operative (Warby 1958c), and in the 1970s there were still feelings by some that funds had been misappropriated by directors. The Co-operative finally failed to establish a sound future for Lockhart, mainly because of material conditions, but also because of cultural factors which worked against it holding together in hard times. Stanner, noting such difficulties with Co-operatives, observed that "aboriginal groups, for all their ideals, are usually made up of factions" (Stanner 1974:57).

7.4. Post-Warby troubles

Jim Cook, the Agriculturalist, was appointed Acting Superintendent after Warby's departure in February 1960 to enter St. Francis Theological College. The Bishop regarded Cook as well-liked and trusted by the Aborigines, and reasonably efficient. Williams was about to come to Lockhart in regard to the gold project, and was able to oversee the Co-operative activities and accounts (Hudson 1960). Administration slackened after the Warbys left, and Williams stopped the signing of blank cheques and

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31 Conversation with John Warby at Rockhampton, 24 August, 1992.
32 Conversation with John Warby at Rockhampton, 24 August, 1992.
33 Conversation with Isaac Hobson at Lockhart River, 22 June, 1992.

other loose practices when he arrived during 1960 (Williams 1960d). He still had difficulty getting a financial statement from Mr Penglase who controlled the accounts (Williams 1960b). The Diocesan Council, meeting on 30 March, considered that the Co-operative was bankrupt, and only "the strictest supervision could hope to salvage for the people any of the hopes that existed in their minds for the future of the Coop; and to save face, the Diocese of the Church of the ABM would need to come financially to the rescue" (Diocese of Carpentaria 1960a). There was then a concerted effort to save the Co-operative from the embarrassment of collapse into bankruptcy, with Williams being the deliverer (Williams 1960b,d,e). In April, the Mission Superintendents had met to discuss a new system of payment of wages fully in cash instead of as rations and a small cash payment. This meant that extra cash was needed to stock stores for cash sales, and at Lockhart Mission, led to increased conflict between the Diocesan Store and the Co-op Store. The Diocesan Council then proposed that all cash transactions and ordering be handed over to the Co-op Store (Imms 1960), and so Williams applied to ABM for a loan of £500 to restock the Co-operative Store and keep it solvent (Williams 1960c). He suspended all other activity, and gradually explained to the Directors the critical financial state. "Directors expressed alarm and submitted that they did not know the affairs of the Society had got into such a bad state" (Williams 1960b,d). Williams felt the strain, but was committed to the face-saving process.

> As already submitted, an effort must be made to save the existence of the Co-operative Society because of the revolting publicity that would result from its winding up, due to bankruptcy, both from the aspect of co-operative movements and that such movements were of a Co-operative Department established by the Australian Board of Missions. These are the only aspects that have influenced me to remain at Lockhart River Mission. How long I can tolerate the conditions, here, I do not know (Williams 1960e).

The position of Coaldrake as a financial agent for the Diocese of Carpentaria now proved to be a little irksome to Williams, who pleaded for his approval of the Store arrangement (Williams 1960f), but Coaldrake wanted more detail on the Store proposals before it was finalised, and planned a visit at the end of June (Coaldrake 1960b). After this was settled, there was some dissatisfaction about high Store prices, and the Diocesan Council expressed its concern to the new Superintendent, J Currie (Diocese of Carpentaria 1960b). Clint upset Williams for writing directly to a staff member about the Co-

operative (Williams 1960g). Clint also advocated to Coaldrake a continuing role for his Co-operative Dept. of ABM, rather than the Bishop, in the control of the Co-operatives (Clint 1960). Williams spent the remainder of the year at Lockhart, and he managed to achieve a small credit by October, but at the same time reported tensions over prices, and that Fr Campbell was checking on prices for the Church Office (Williams 1960h). The division of authority between the ABM and the Diocese was now manifested in suspicion and resentment at the effects of the debt to be overcome in the Co-operative.

Bishop Hudson resigned in October 1960, and the former Dean of Rockhampton, now Priest Director of the Torres Strait, the Rev. Seering John Matthews, was appointed the new Bishop (Bayton 1965:188-9). While Bishop-elect, Matthews became aware of the underlying tension of the three-way authority relationships of the Bishop of Carpentaria, the Co-operative, and the ABM, so he wrote to Coaldrake to request some definition of the relationship.

> Who appoints, terminates or extends appointments of Co-op officials? Should L.R.M. or other Mission Co-op directors write to you, or should they write to the Bishop who would act in consultation with you? ... I know that the Diocesan Council is somewhat bewildered about the present situation (Matthews 1960).

Coaldrake's reply reaffirmed the division of authority, with the Co-operative answerable to the ABM Director of Co-operatives, under the rules of the Society. The new Superintendent would be Deputy-Supervisor, answerable to the ABM for the Co-operative, and answerable to the Bishop as Superintendent on other Mission matters (Coaldrake 1960c). The influence and gratuitous advice of Coaldrake in the running of the Missions, was a problem for Bishop Matthews, and undermined Diocesan support for the Co-operative approach (Diocese of Carpentaria 1961a,b). In April 1961, Bishop Matthews requested that Coaldrake pass back to the him the handling of negotiations for funds from the Government (Coaldrake 1961; O'Leary 1961e).

7.5. Superintendent Currie

The new Superintendent, J Currie, was one of nine new staff at Lockhart in 1960, and he had a far more authoritarian approach to that of his predecessor, as Williams alludes:

> To enter a field with a metaphorically mailed fist, announcements of rigid discipline, threats of disallowance of wages if work is not done (wages that are a sinecure), punishment for offences committed without removing the cause and the imposition of a curfew savours more of prison life than a field for the education and persuasive encouragement of a people to advance by stages into the arena of culture and civilization (Williams 1961).

Currie's legal-rational authoritarianism and strict pragmatism are revealed in his own comprehensive report which Bishop Matthews requested on the state of the Mission. Currie had none of the personal rapport with Aborigines of Warby, although he was happy to encourage cultural activities including dancing, hunting and fishing, in a recreational context. He inspired no charismatic authority, and had a military approach to discipline:

> Morale is quite good among the older workers and pensioners who are amenable to discipline and appear reasonably content with life except for the poor housing. Morale is poor among the younger men and lack of discipline is very noticeable. There is very little sense of responsibility, no desire to work, often truculent arrogant and disrespectful. The general attitude is to avoid work as much as possible while at the same time criticising the mission for not paying higher wages.
>
> The children are fairly well behaved in school but receive little or no training or discipline at home such as punishment for theft or disobedience. Lack of home training in hygiene and cleanliness is deplorable. This is to some extent overcome by enforced cleanliness at the Childrens'[sic] Centre but this should never be considered as an adequate substitute for proper home training (Currie 1961a:2).

Currie displays no understanding of Aboriginal personhood or child rearing practices, or of appropriate ways of developing hygienic practices appropriate to a village style of life, nor of the likely lethargy underlying the poverty and underdevelopment of the new life to which they had been partly socialised. The permissiveness of child-rearing, and the lack of discipline, clashed with his own cultural expectations that children are moulded through training and discipline. Hamilton notes, in the typical child-rearing practices in north-central Arnhem Land, that appropriate behaviour is acquired from the modelling of adults, rather than through teaching or forms of discipline, and that the permissiveness is affected by subtle pressures, such as to share food, and not to be aggressive, and by a social context which "assumes that humans are 'naturally' sociable and generally agreeable to maximising others' benefits as well as their own" (Hamilton 1981:150-1).

Currie's report to the Bishop also contains a depressing analysis of the run down state of buildings and plant, poor hygiene and health conditions, including extensive hookworm infestations, and an abundance of rats, fleas, dogs and cockroaches, which he was taking action to wipe out. He criticised the Co-op Store prices and stated that the Mission was split into anti- and pro-Co-op groups. "Quite frequently the question will be asked whether the goods to be unloaded off the boat are Mission or Co-op. goods and depending on their attitude, people will then either help to unload or disappear" (Currie 1961a:6). This suggests that the Co-operative was seen to be the domain of the few Directors, rather than belonging to the membership as a whole. Currie summarised the needs as:

> The great and urgent needs are for EQUIPMENT, HOUSING, EXTRA STAFF, and a HIGHER LIVING STANDARD FOR THE PEOPLE. The latter could be obtained by higher wages, dissolution of the Co-op Store and return to Mission store sales, establishment of your proposed wholesale department, a better variety of food, more agriculture and by close supervision of the buying habits of the people. Left to themselves, even after 12 months operation, the people do not yet know how to spend their money, and it is very doubtful that this would rectify itself (Currie 1961a:7).

He also recommended the relocation of the Mission at a more suitable site. The costs he estimated for adequate redevelopment of the Mission are summarised as follow:

Increased wages, annual cost:	£47,476
Special current needs – capital expenditure:	£13,525
Immediate future needs – £110,250 over 2 year, annual:	£55,125
Near future needs – £83,250 over 5 years, annual:	£16,650
TOTAL	£132,776

The total Government grant to the Diocese for *all* its Missions for the year to 30 June, 1960, was quoted by the Minister as £85,160 (Adair 1961), making the ability of the Diocese of Carpentaria to meet the real cost of development an impossible dream. Despite this, in March 1961, the Diocesan Council, after discussing the reports from the Superintendents, resolved to seek extra capital, requested amendment of the Co-operative Articles of Association for Lockhart and Moa Is. so that the Bishop became the Supervisor, and also requested that the Lockhart Co-operative Store be returned to Mission control (Diocese of Carpentaria 1961a). The Co-operative was limited to small-scale producer activities.

The apparent rebellion of the younger generation indicates a spirit of resistance to Currie's authoritarian and insensitive control, and his use of coercion, as well as the malaise, lack of direction, and continuing underdevelopment of the Mission. The situation is well illustrated by an occasion when Aborigines were affronted by Currie confining three men, who were under sentence of the Court, in a newly built gaol. One man refused to enter and became violent, but was forced in.

> Shortly after, a crowd of about 25 people assembled near the gaol and demanded to know why I had built the gaol, why the men were placed therein and using threatening language, demanded that I release the men immediately and pull the gaol down. I refused to do so and after a considerable time arguing and making threats to me they left the gaol and had a disorderly meeting down the village. About 10.00 pm a message was brought to me by the Village Councillors, who were obviously frightened, that unless I release the prisoners immediately the people would pull the gaol down and release the prisoners themselves. They also threatened to beat up the Councillors and the Police.
>
> My reply was that I refused their demands and that I would not listen to them under a threat. I am pleased to state that the whole Staff supported me in this decision. .... I added that if they behaved themselves I would hear them in the morning. ... Another noisy meeting was then held in the village which lasted until about 3.00 am but the threats were not carried out (Currie 1961d).

In the morning there were apologies from the 'troublemakers', who still requested release of the men and removal of the gaol. Currie refused again, but agreed to re-opening their cases to consider remitting part of their sentences, provided good behaviour followed. To this there was reluctant agreement. In his covering letter to the Deputy Director, P J Killoran, Currie noted that there had been four other similar incidents in the twelve months they had been there, and blamed a group of six men as the source of the trouble. "Several members of the Staff have been threatened and attacked and order has been restored only with great difficulty" (Currie 1961d). This conflict indicates the confrontational approach of power and coercion taken by Currie, and the strong resistance it drew from the Aborigines. The gaol was the ultimate symbol of his power to control and isolate the fractious from the relationships that are intrinsic to Aboriginal being, and to negate traditional authority and decision-making. Currie's coercive legal-rational authority received specific resistance by a few, and a general resistance alongside a reluctant compliance by the wider community. More passive and subversive forms of resistance through lack of co-operation, avoidance, etc., would certainly have followed to destroy his effectiveness. Such an approach was evident in later years, when

the Aborigines typically waited out the departure of an oppressive Manager. While Currie 'forgave' those who caused the disturbance, he had no sense of his own paternalistic injustice, nor ability to relate to them as persons, rather than as inmates of a corrective institution. It appears that some other staff members had difficulty in relating to the Aborigines also, and this is not surprising, given the large influx of new missionaries, and Currie's style of leadership. Currie saw the solution to Lockhart's problems to be money. At the end of 1961 he wrote to the Minister, Dr. Noble:

> Without considerably increased funds, we are wasting our time and energies here, we are achieving nothing. I am fed up, the Staff are fed up and the people are apathetic and appear resigned to a life of hopelessness. Unless realistic funds are forthcoming in 1962 we might as well pack up and leave here and ask you to administer the people of Lockhart. That is our present intention (Currie 1961e).

He left Lockhart River Mission on 15 September, 1962 (Currie 1962), after less than two years' service.

7.6. Closure of the Co-operative

The final end of the Co-operative began in 1962, when repairs to the *Yola* led to a debt to the Diocese of £800. The *Yola* was passed to the Diocese, and the debt was written off. The lack of financial returns to the Registrar of Co-operatives brought a threat of deregistration, and in March 1963, it was resolved to voluntarily wind up the Co-operative and pay a final dividend to all financial members (assessed as 17/11 in the pound). A letter of May 1964, indicates that the dividends were not paid (Killoran 1964a), and the remaining funds, including Members Loan Trust Account balance of $1308.78, was used to meet a tax assessment of $1990 in 1967 (LRACCS 1960-7).

Despite the demise of the Co-operative, this period is remembered by Lockhart River Aborigines as a time of vitality at the Mission, and John Warby is remembered as the best of the old missionaries because of the way in which he accepted them, established warm personal relationships, and battled tirelessly for the community. His charismatic type of authority, the social benefits of local employment, the communal emphasis, and the material benefits that resulted, gained an acceptance of social change and associated

bureaucratic controls. The failure of the Co-operative, and of Government and Church support, indicate the marginalisation of Aboriginal people in Australian society, and the difficulty of overcoming underdevelopment in these circumstances. The Government had not yet come to grips the full demands of its assimilation policy, and, at the same time, found difficulty in pursuing its policies through the critical agency of the Church, as it pressured the Government to make its long-term policy a shorter-term one. Bishop Matthews now began a public campaign to draw the attention of both Government and Church to the state of Aboriginal Missions in the Diocese of Carpentaria, and the urgent need for support. Discussions were also held between Bishop and Government officials about the transfer of Lockhart River Mission to another site. In the next few years, however, the Government would squeeze the Church out financially, take over the Missions, and begin to pour in millions of dollars in order to improve rapidly material conditions and to intensify its resocialisation program.

8. The Demise of Mission Control and Relocation

The difficulties that ended the Co-operative era were to lead to the demise of the Church's control of the Mission itself. At first, Bishop Matthews attempted to raise adequate funds for the development of the Diocesan Missions through a public campaign, and at the same time, he considered the relocation of the Lockhart River Mission. The Government reacted defensively to the Bishop's campaign, and while grants increased, they remained inadequate for any large scale upgrading of Mission conditions. Lockhart River Mission, in particular, remained in severe underdevelopment due to its isolation, lack of viable local industries and funds to support their development. Various proposals to relocate the Mission elsewhere were overtaken, however, by the decision to hand over the management of the three Cape York Aboriginal Missions (Lockhart River, Mitchell River and Edward River) to Government control. The Government itself then took up the decision to relocate the Lockhart people at a site to the north near Iron Range, in the region first proposed by the diocese. Bishop Matthews considered that any attempt by the Church to continue with the inadequate resources would be doing disservice to the Aborigines.[34] This chapter examines the events that led to the Government gaining direct control of Lockhart River Mission, and to its relocation near Iron Range airfield. It further examines these events in the light of the previous Mission experience.

8.1. Bishops Matthews' campaign

In February 1961, Bishop Matthews began an extensive campaign to publicise the state of the Anglican Aboriginal Missions in the Cape York Peninsula, in churches, the Press, radio and television, beginning in two Brisbane churches on 20 February. The Bishop trod a delicate path between describing the desperate conditions and massive funding required, and avoiding direct criticism of the Queensland Department of Native Affairs or the Australian Board of Missions for their efforts. The Government's underlying expectations of the Churches are revealed in the various exchanges that followed. The

34 Conversation with The Rt Rev A H Hall-Matthews at Lockhart River, February, 1989.

OPINION

Native plight

ALL Queenslanders with goodwill towards their fellow men, irrespective of color, will expect prompt action to end the deplorable conditions under which aboriginals are reported to be living at Anglican Church missions in the Gulf country.

What that action should be, and who is to promote it, should be the subject of immediate discussions between the mission authorities and the Government.

This is clearly a field for close co-operation between Church and State.

The difficulties mentioned by the Bishop of Carpentaria yesterday are those that stem almost entirely from inadequate finance. The Bishop has criticised his own people for their lack of support; but clearly the State Government cannot stand aside and allow such degrading living conditions.

The missions should be able to serve their proper role as a stepping stone for natives towards the white man's civilisation.

They can hardly do that if the standard of living they are able to offer is no better—and perhaps even worse — than that to which the aboriginal is accustomed in his tribal territory.

16 LIVING IN A HUT

● ANGLICAN MISSION CLAIM

Up to 16 aboriginals were living to a hut at three Anglican missions in the Gulf country, the Anglican Bishop of Carpentaria, Bishop John Matthews, said today.

He said that three families were living in one hut.

The missions are at Mitchell River, Edward River, and Lockhart River.

Bishop Matthews criticised the Commonwealth and State Governments, which, he said, did not provide enough money for the missions.

"One of our greatest problems at these missions is housing," he said.

"Even if the Governments gave us enough money to build 20 houses a year at each mission, that would only be a start."

Bishop Matthews said the Commonwealth and State Governments helped in the upkeep of the missions, but that was not enough.

The aboriginals, he said, must have better buildings, and equipment if their standard of living was to be raised.

"Children not ignorant"

"Aboriginal children have been taught at the schools, and are not ignorant any longer," he said.

"They have reached a stage of development where, if they are to be assimilated, they must be given the opportunities. The church has not the money to do this."

Bishop Matthews said he would place reports on the conditions at the missions before a sub-committee of the Anglican Church's Australian Board of Missions in Brisbane on Wednesday.

The board's chairman, the Rev. Canon F. Coaldrake, of Sydney, who would be in Brisbane for the meeting, would present the reports to a meeting of the board in Sydney in April.

Press eagerly reported the Bishop as stating that "the missions were in a hopeless position through failure of Church and State to provide finance", and "his diocese was bankrupt, with the bank calling for reduction of the £11,000 overdraft", while "the State had failed to provide promised loan funds for 1960" (*The Courier-Mail,* 20 February, 1961:3). The Director of Native Affairs swiftly denied the latter claim, stating that the Bishop did not know, as his agent Coaldrake did, that the funds had been granted (O'Leary 1961a). On the next day, Bishop Matthews wrote a cordial letter to O'Leary, expressing the hope that he would listen to the Bishop being interviewed on radio, suggesting that he would be as happy as he for a Commission to investigate the Missions, and ending by saying: "It is hardly necessary for me to say that newspaper reports are unreliable!" (Matthews 1961a).

In the exchanges, the Government's assimilation policy was revealed to be, in practice, a long-term policy, limited for the present to basic funding to allow the Churches to bear the burden of protection and maintenance in a slow process of change over several generations. O'Leary defended his Department's record, and stated:

> You can be sure that my Government appreciates the problem of coloured peoples in this State and with particular reference to Church Missions, in conjunction with Church Authorities, is taking every possible action for their advancement, consistent with funds made available by the State and the Churches (O'Leary 1961b).

He also argued perversely that the remote Missions were less advanced than Government settlements and needed less funding. In a letter of advice to the Under Secretary, he shifted the blame by stating:

> The Queensland Government has consistently granted the fullest autonomy to responsible Churches actively engaged in Missionary work amongst aboriginals in Queensland and consequently expects a reasonable return for the monies given the Missions in furtherance of such policy (O'Leary 1961d).

In April, O'Leary advised Coaldrake that Carpentaria would receive no extra subsidies for 1960/61, as the Missions were receiving additional assistance from the pension funds now being paid to them (O'Leary 1961c). In the same month, Bishop Matthews undertook a 5-day campaign in Melbourne, during which he gained the support of the eccentric Francis James, the Editor of *The Anglican.* James promoted a pilot project,

calling on twelve parishes or groups to contribute £500 each to build nine houses, and £4,500 for sewerage disposal units. "This is only a pilot project. More than £250,000 needs to be spent on these Mission Stations. But once our pilot scheme is completed, it will put us in the position where we can go in good conscience to the Government of Queensland for more help" (James 1961). The Australian Board of Missions also responded with a special grant of £5,000 for urgent capital works (*The Courier Mail,* 26 April, 1961).

The Diocesan Council of the Diocese of Carpentaria, meeting on 21 June, expressed with more confidence that their policy on Aboriginal Missions could not be a standstill one, but one that continued to press for far more substantial subsidies for Aboriginal wages and overheads (Diocese of Carpentaria 1961b). Coaldrake attended another meeting five days later, and expressed his view that "any handover from the Church control to Govt. control should be done now" (Diocese of Carpentaria 1961c). This underlying thought of a possible handover of management to the Government appeared to be as serious a thought as it was a threat. The *Cairns Post* reported the Bishop's words at the Provincial Synod of the Church, which met in Rockhampton in September, 1961:

> Unless there is a more realistic approach by governments to the problem of the care and assimilation of aborigines, the Church of England could not carry on its work in the mission stations in Cape York Peninsula .... "I hang my head in shame as I go round the missions," he said, describing the deplorable conditions under which aborigines were compelled to live and the sad lack of staff and equipment for the training of young natives (*Cairns Post,* 21 September, 1961).

Further submissions by the Diocese stressed that ABM was contributing more than the Government, and the Church was contributing at its maximum level. The request for an extra £35,214 in 1961 was met by the Government, with O'Leary's advocacy (O'Leary 1961j), and an extra £20,000 gained the following year (O'Leary 1962). Bishop Matthews continued the pressure for increases, adding further arguments by pointing out the sacrificial scale of salaries received by missionaries, the possibility of having to reduce staff, and the need to increase both Aboriginal wages and capital expenditure

(Matthews 1962). He gained a more modest increase of £7,400 for 1962/63 (O'Leary 1963a).

The tension between Government and Church produced by Bishop Matthews' campaign, brought to the surface the underlying problem that the Church faced in the alliance of Church and State in the operation of its Missions. The Church functioned both as agent of the State in welfare and social development, and as instrument of spiritual transformation, in order to meet the dual goals of resocialising and evangelising. Not only was the Church dependent on uncertain support from the wider Australian Church, but it also became a captive of Government bureaucrats whose primary aim was not the advancement of Aborigines, but the minimisation of government spending within a minimalist long-term policy of containment of Aborigines. The Church was used and its goodwill abused in this process, for it put the Church in the invidious position of being a beggar at the Government's door, having to plead desperate circumstances to gain an adequate response. The Church, then, was subject to minimum possibilities instead of maximum gains in developing the Missions.

8.2. Proposals to relocate Lockhart River Aborigines

In early 1961, the superintendent, J T Currie (see 7.2.7.), expressed great dissatisfaction with the state of the Lockhart River Mission, and suggested that consideration be given to moving the Mission to a new site (Currie 1961a:8). In a detailed report in June, he advanced a long list of reasons for the move, including the Mission's geographical and social isolation, the difficult road access, which is cut off in the wet season, poor anchorage, high costs to supply and access, most buildings requiring replacement, no room to extend the village, soil full of hookworm, little scope for agriculture, beach impregnated with night soil, re-siting would allow proper planning, and now was the opportune time before extensive work in undertaken. He recommended that the transfer occur in stages, over about five years, as finance became available and buildings were completed, to a site to be determined further north, closer to Iron Range airstrip and Portland Roads wharf (Currie 1961c).

At the same time, Bishop Matthews had discussions with the Director of Native Affairs, and with the Minister. On June 29, the Bishop commented that the Mission was wrongly sited, and O'Leary responded:

> I personally opposed the establishment of the Mission on its present site in 1924 and offered the then Bishop of Carpentaria assistance in the set-up of a Mission in the vicinity of Somerset. The offer was not accepted.
>
> My views are that Lockhart River Mission will never be anything warranting recognition as a Mission with potential which modern administration demands but the cost of removal of it elsewhere is now something beyond which I can visualise (O'Leary 1961f:3-4).

On the following day, during an interview with the Minister, further thoughts were expressed.

> Mr O'Leary said that Bishop Matthews had spoken of the necessity for the removal of the Lockhart River Mission to another site, and agreed that it must be done gradually – the same as the Government did at Bamaga. ... Bishop Matthews said it was necessary that the Lockhart River Mission be moved from its present position. A suggestion was that the mission be moved to land nearer to Portland Roads, near Cape Griffith (Albatross Cove) (Noble 1961).

No consideration was given to Bishop Davies' rationale for siting the Mission at a central location acceptable to both northern and southern coastal groups (Tennant 1959:174), or to consultation with the Aborigines. The emphasis was on the practicalities of access and administration. On the same day, Bishop Matthews wrote formally to the Director of Native Affairs of his desire to relocate the Mission nearer to Portland Roads, and enquired whether an additional area of land could be obtained.

> If an area within the Claudie Gold and Mineral Field north of the Mission Reserve, adjacent to the coast and the Portland Roads/Iron Range Road aerodrome, could be provided as an additional area to the Mission, arrangements could then be made to remove the Mission from its present site to a new site to be selected within this area (Matthews 1961b).

O'Leary strongly supported this request, and noted that, "in the interests of administration of this area, it is essential for the new area to adjoin the present Reserve and not be alienated from it"(O'Leary 1961g). O'Leary, however, was also sensitive to the opposition of the Churches to Comalco's mining on the Weipa Reserve, and to their fears of mining activity on the Lockhart River Reserve, and a month later he sought the advice of the Department and Mines and Development (O'Leary 1961i). The Under Secretary was open to a proposal, but noted iron ore and gold interests, and stated: "To protect the interests of the Mining Industry the area east of Claudie River as far as

Quintall Creek and Ham Hill should be excluded from consideration" (Under Secretary, Dept of Development & Mines 1961). Six weeks later, O'Leary wrote to the Bishop suggesting that he renew his request, not on the basis of extension to the Reserve, but "that the area which you have in mind be made available to you and your Diocese on special lease or similar title, at a token rental. Terms would be subject to Queensland Government's requirements at any time on the area for development in any manner". After noting the mineral areas to be excluded, he continued,

> your agreement in writing is sought implying that any Reserve which you require to be defined for Mission extension purposes be granted, subject to the requirements of the Department of Mines, Forestry and Agriculture and Stock, necessary for the future development of North Queensland and with special reference to the Mines Department's requirements (O'Leary 1961k).

This insecurity for the future was clearly unacceptable to the Church, and led to the diocese to abandon the proposal and to look to other possibilities further afield. The Bishop was overseas for some months, and in May 1962, following his return, the Archdeacon expressed their change of mind by stating: "it would be unwise to re-locate Lockhart River Mission in the same area. It is expected that a plan to transfer the people to our other Missions will be submitted in the near future" (Lupton 1962). This plan considered resettling the Lockhart people across the Cape in the 'foreign' land of the Edward and Mitchell River Missions (ABM 1963a). The Board of the ABM was cautious in its response to this plan, and in May 1962, expressed its caution by recording: "interest in the possibility that subject to the approval of the Government of Queensland and adequate financial assistance from the Government, and provided the consent of the people concerned [i.e. the Aborigines] is freely given ..." (ABM 1963b). The Board then commissioned the Chairman to prepare a Memorandum for the October meeting. The Chairman's Memorandum is very careful not to make specific recommendations, but lays out arguments for and against. One aspect of this was the optimistic view that this would be a temporary step, for:

> the training of Aborigines in the development of skills which will enable them to take their place in the general community is the avowed aim of Government programmes. This must mean the eventual movement of Aborigines from Cape York into southern townships and rural areas except for two types of persons [aged

> and incapacitated, and capable workers employed in Cape York projects] (ABM 1963b).

Coaldrake suggested also that a temporary location might be found in the Portland Roads/Iron Range region. He also pointed out the high financial costs involved in relocation, and drew the distinction between the Church's primary responsibility for "pastoral ministry of parishioners" and welfare of the aged and incapacitated, and the Government's primary responsibility for the general service of welfare and training. He then quoted advice from Dr. Arthur Capell (Anglican priest, linguist and student of Professor Elkin) that highlighted the practical and cultural obstacles to such a move, such as differences of culture and language, attachment to land and spiritual roots, and whether the Lockhart Aborigines would really want such a change. Coaldrake also reminded the Board of the policy they had adopted on Aboriginal Reserves in 1959, ie. secure tenure, desirability of rural enterprises on their land, and preferential treatment for Aborigines in the use of their Reserve lands. He then proposed a conundrum:

> If the Church finds that the Lockhart people do not want to accept Government proposals should the Church respect the people's wishes and uphold them even if the Church is convinced of the ultimate need for the things planned by the Government (ABM 1963b)?

The Board subsequently passed a circumspect motion: "That with regard to the Lockhart River Mission the Board considers the best solution is the removal of the Mission people if it can be arranged with the consent of the people and to their advantage" (ABM 1963c). A community resident, Isaac Hobson, states that there was a big argument at a public meeting held at Lockhart River early in 1963, and the people refused to move to the Gulf side.[35]

After this, the proposed relocation became combined with a proposal for a handover of control of the Lockhart River Mission to the Government. A meeting was held on 27 March, 1963 between Bishop Matthews, Archdeacon Lupton, Director, O'Leary, and Deputy Director, Killoran. Two key outcomes were reported:

> 3. The Church feels that such a project [relocation] is beyond its financial resources and whilst the Church does not wish to avoid any of her

35 Conversation with Isaac Hobson at Lockhart River, 22 June, 1992.

> responsibilities, it considers that the time is now opportune for the Government to assume responsibility for the temporal welfare whilst the Church continues with Spiritual ministrations.
>
> 4. It was agreed that the re-location of Lockhart River would be most practicable somewhere in the Northern Peninsula area whereby the general administration could be controlled from the existing organisation at Bamaga and that the Bamaga area meets adequately desirable requirements ... (O'Leary 1963b).

A request was to be made for the Laradeenya Holding close to Bamaga, which was then on public offer, and a Committee was to be formed, including Church, Government and Aboriginal representatives, to consider suitable sites for the relocation. The Bishop drafted a letter of request and a press release on 29 March, and wrote formally on 5 May, noting the "unanimous approval of the Diocesan Council, and its members were satisfied to hear of your guarantee that no inhabitant of Lockhart River Mission will be moved from the present site against his will" (Matthews 1963b). The Australian Board of Missions gave general approval to the proposals at its meeting on 30 April - 2 May (ABM 1963d). The Bishop planned to visit Lockhart in the second week of April to place the possibility of this move before them (Matthews 1963a). On 25 June, the Queensland Cabinet gave approval in principle to the relocation (Watkin 1963).

8.2.1. Aboriginal acceptance and rejection

At another meeting at Lockhart River in July, the people elected residents Billy Brown and Eddie Omeenyo to the Inspection Committee, both being in favour of the move, and the Bishop appointed two others.

> I have nominated Johnny Butcher and Arthur Pascoe for membership of the committee. The former is in favour of the move. The latter is opposed to it, and it is hoped that he can be brought to see the value of the re-settlement by being included in the discussions, and by having the opportunity to see the proposed site (Matthews 1963c).

The Committee of the four Aborigines, Killoran and Archdeacon Lupton, did not actually inspect possible sites until 21 August. This was followed by an inspection by Stephens of the Dept of Agriculture and Stock. He confirmed that the Committee's first preference for a site was the best one. This was followed by another public meeting at Lockhart River which Isaac Hobson described this as a 'hot one'. "George Rocky

shouted No! Dan Hobson shouted No!"[36] But Johnny Butcher and Eddie Omeenyo had been there and convinced the young people to go, and about 14 people moved there the following year, 1964. Isaac Hobson saw this as an opportunity for him to get out and see other places. He denied that they went because of local trouble, as suggested by Chase (Chase 1980:125-6; 1988:134-5). The difference of opinion appeared to have been primarily between older residents with a closer sense of cultural values and attachment to land, as well as some in community leadership roles, and a group of restless young men desiring to escape the confines of the Mission and 'see the world'. The first group of workers who went gave the new settlement the name, "Umagico" (Killoran 1963b), a place name from the Lockhart River valley (from *yumachiku,* "black-headed python place").

The Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship, based in Sydney, protested to the Minister in July:

> It seems incredible that people may be removed, just like overlanded cattle, simply because they are native people, without rights or title to land anywhere in Queensland. How on earth are the people to be rehabilitated, when they don't know where to belong, or what they can call their own? (and since the Church conforms to rule of Government, the poor Christians can't even call their souls their own) (Horner 1963).

Pragmatic and economic reasons were advanced in justification of the relocation:

> The Church authorities submit, and the Government concurs, that the next stage in the transition of the Lockhart people is for their re-establishment at a location which will provide adequate housing, an educational standard equivalent to any in the State, suitable agricultural and pastoral lands for development and adequate medical facilities (Killoran 1963a).

Responses to other protests emphasised that the transfers were entirely voluntary (McAllister 1964). Hinton reports strong resistance by Lockhart people, to both the relocation and to transfer of authority to the Government, while he was at the Mission with Lamont West to make a film on the Bora. "They want to retain all the advantages of the Mission at the present site, and they are aware of the fact that for as long as the Bishop's guarantee holds, any attempt to move them is impossible" (Hinton 1964:2). It is significant that these two sympathetic whites from outside the community were present

36 Conversation with Isaac Hobson at Lockhart River, 22 June, 1992.

at the time. As was the case with other researchers, Thomson (1933) and Laade (1970), their support for cultural practices was a stimulus to a re-assertion of cultural values through some attempt to revive Bora ceremonies, and to be more active in expressing their views. Four people returned from Umagico to Lockhart River in November 1964, on 'holiday', without funds, and refused to go back. Attempts were made by the Diocesan Registrar to establish rules for 'visitors' to Lockhart River that would discourage the flow south and encourage moves north. He noted that 'visitors' tended to speak against Umagico to others in private (Horwood 1964). Killoran (now Director) was at first open to two-way movement, but sought to prevent return travel in January (Killoran 1964b, 1965a). Public Aboriginal resistance to the move emerged when Stephen Giblet (friend and language informant of Lamont West) attended a Conference of *The Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders* in Canberra in April 1965. *The Australian* reported his statement that "his people did not want to be moved from the Church Mission where they were born" (Thornton 1965).

Bishop Matthews visited the Mission in May and became "convinced that the greater number of the inhabitants desire to remain at the present site" (Matthews 1965a). Improved shipping services gave him hope that cattle and other produce could be shipped out, and he noted a better spirit in the community. The ABM responded to this situation suggesting another look at the possibilities at the old Mission site. "The Board's suggestion for reconsideration is made in the hope that new possibilities for development of industrial activity in the area might be discovered if the question were opened up again" (Coaldrake 1965a). The Bishop had asked for staff for any new development. The Aborigines remaining at Lockhart were not pressed to move, and the focus soon shifted to negotiating a transfer of management responsibilities to the Government. Outside manipulation for the move had finally been defeated by the concession that it would not be enforced, and by Aboriginal forms of resistance. With some encouragement from the Church (I moved a motion in Synod), most of those who had moved returned to the new Lockhart River settlement in the 1970s.

The whole process of the relocation proposal and its failure, illustrates the presumptive paternalism of Church and Government in assuming to determine what is best for the Aborigines, without any attempt to take as a starting point the desires and aspirations of the Aborigines themselves. The determining factors were the difficult conditions at the Mission, the economic burden to rectify them, and the ultimate aim of the assimilation policy to resocialise Aborigines into white society, with the expectation that Reserves would eventually be vacated. The move to Bamaga was congenial for both administration and economic reasons, and would reduce the burden of maintaining the marginalised and politically powerless Aborigines. It was an idea that took hold with a life of its own. No consideration was given to the Aboriginal attachment to their traditional lands, or to what might happen to the existing Reserve were it to be vacated.

8.3. Handover of the Mission to Government management

The Bishop was again compelled to ask for substantial financial assistance (£47,603), not only for Lockhart River, but also for Mitchell and Edward River Missions, which had suffered destruction from a cyclone in February 1964. Lockhart River had incurred additional cost due to the necessity of purchasing a new vessel, as the *Panton* had run aground and had been a write-off (Matthews 1965b). There was some negative verbal response from the Government, due to the financial pressures of a drought and a strike at Mt Isa. The Bishop wrote directly to the Minister in November to advise an expected deficit of £57,000 at the end of December. Deliberate pressure against the Diocese by the new Director, P J Killoran, followed. Killoran evidently did not like his power to control limited by the Church, which was likely to hold on to its agency role if more adequate funds were made available to Missions. He rightly perceived an ambivalence in the Church's thoughts on handing over management of its Missions to direct Government control. His criticisms of the Church and tightening of the funding supply, were means used to force the Church into a position where it had to relinquish its management role. In a draft advice to the Director-General of Education, Killoran criticised the Diocesan management and estimated that extraordinary expenditure should amount to only £15,000 (Killoran 1965b). On 16 December he wrote to the Bishop to

request copies of audited accounts of the Missions for the previous five years (Killoran 1965c), and then on 30 December he advised the Diocesan Secretary that an increase of only £1,000 had been granted for 1965/66 (Killoran 1965d).

In the meantime, the Diocesan Council had passed a motion to:

> "inform the Chairman of the Australian Board of Missions that due to the unavailability of a Superintendent and adequate staff for Lockhart River Mission we must therefore ask you to agree to our opening negotiations with the Qld. Govt. for that Govt. to take over the administration of the Mission" (Diocese of Carpentaria 1965).

Thornton had tendered his resignation in May 1965, but remained at the Mission awaiting a replacement. Coaldrake responded that the Board had already supported a possible handover in 1963, and again in 1964 (Coaldrake 1965b). Government interest in a takeover was indicated in a letter from the responsible Minister, J C Pizzey, in October, regarding the Diocese's request for takeover of the Mission schools by the Education Department.

> .. as has been indicated from time to time in discussions with his Lordship the Bishop, it is becoming abundantly manifest that, as a result of the training and development provided and encouraged by missionaries throughout the State, Mission Aborigines are rapidly becoming sophisticated and developed to such a degree that the material sponsorship demanded of missionary organisations, is approaching a standard beyond the economic and staff resources of Churches and it is at this stage the Government realises there should be a change whereby the State accepts responsibility for the material sphere whilst the Church cares for the spiritual needs in the lives of the people (Pizzey 1965:2).

Bishop Matthews quoted these words in writing to the Minister in March 1966 to request discussions regarding the State assuming control of the Aboriginal Missions (Matthews 1966). This was followed by a Diocesan Council resolution on 26 April which requested:

> the commencement of negotiations for the State to assume progressive responsibility for the material administration of Lockhart, Edward and Mitchell River Missions and that Lockhart River Mission be placed under the control of the Department of Native Affairs by the 30th March, 1967 (Evans 1966).

In response, the Director advised the Minister that he had discussed the situation with the Bishop. Contrary to his previous assessment, he now declared that the main problems were the acute shortage of funds and difficulty in obtaining suitable staff, and he recommended a special grant of £40,000 while the position was assessed (Killoran

1966a). Cabinet quickly approved this grant in May, and authorised the Director to enter negotiations for the handover of material administration (Murphy 1966). Letters from Superintendent Thornton indicate that the Director had written to him on 23 December, 1965, about possible sites in the Lockhart region for a new village. In August 1966, Thornton intended surveying up the Lockhart River (Thornton 1966). Attention soon moved back to the Claudie River Gold and Mineral Field near Iron Range where the area including Nest Hill was to become available (Killoran 1966b).

Cabinet approval of the handover included the opportunity for Mission staff to be employed as Public Servants, and for a subsidy of £2,500 a year for five years for the costs of each Chaplain to be appointed by the Bishop, with the Anglican Church having the sole responsibility for spiritual ministry. The target date for the handover was 1 May, 1967 (Pizzey 1967), but the transfer of Lockhart River Mission took effect last on 22 May (Killoran 1967; ABM Review, August 1967). An inspection of a new site near Iron Range was made at the same time by the Regional District Officer, T Murphy, the Superintendent and Aboriginal Councillors, and the latter "provisionally agreed" to the site (Murphy 1967). Cabinet approved in June of the acquisition of the Nest Hill site, adjacent land to the coast, and portion of a lease held by Tooheys (for a water supply), as reserve land (Bjelke-Petersen 1967). Construction of the new settlement at a cost estimated initially at $400,000 (*The Courier-Mail,* 21 June 1967), was completed in 1969, and the final resettlement of the remaining people at the old Mission site took place in April 1969, with the assistance of the Navy vessel, *Paluma.*

8.4. Institutional failure

Among the agents of change in this period, Bishop Matthews stand out as the most significant, even though he was constrained by the failure of the Mission institution to achieve its aims, and he was finally manipulated by Government officials in the handover of the Missions. The missionaries then at Lockhart River Mission did not have the resources, or the attitudes and abilities necessary, to build effective relationships and to overcome the apathy and dependencies of the underdeveloped conditions of the

Mission. The Bishop's determined campaign to salvage some future for the Aboriginal Missions, Lockhart in particular, reveals his *individuality* in seeking to effect change, but also the weight of the impossible financial burden the Diocese was carrying in its effort to maintain and develop the social, spiritual and economic dimensions of the Aboriginal Missions. The good sense of Capell in pointing out cultural aspects and the likely feelings of the Aboriginal people, and the Bishop's final adherence to the principle that the Aborigines should not be moved without their consent were the only factors that reduced the destructive impact of the impending rapid social change on the Lockhart River people. The Aborigines grasped this sole commitment of the Bishop to their interests, opposed the handover to the Government, and felt let down when it finally took place.

The eventual handover of the Missions, and the relocation of the Lockhart River Mission, were the result of legal-rational action alone to solve the practical and economic problems of the Mission, and there was no element of new charismatic vision to relate the proposed changes, or any alternatives, to Aboriginal aspirations for their well-being. The move northwards to the new site represented a reluctant move away from cultural associations of land and tradition by the Aborigines, and the beginning of an intense period of attempted resocialisation towards assimilation, under the control of the Queensland Government.

8.5. Forty-three years of Mission in retrospect

Three factors coalesced in different ways in the operation of the Lockhart River Mission – the character and approach of key Mission staff, the resources of finance and personnel, and Aboriginal responses. These factors provide a useful basis to review briefly the periods of Mission history that have been examined.

The foundation period of Rowan's 14 years service established the basic duality of Mission practice – 'civilise and evangelise'. Particular aspects of this in practice were:

- 'colonial social relations' of superior and inferior cultures, which was translated by Aborigines as a symbiotic 'boss-relationship'
- resocialising to village-style living with small-scale agriculture and outside employment, with the aim to develop self-sufficiency
- the introduction of Christianity in a mixture of Anglo-Catholic practice and the Torres Strait Islander style of interpreting this.

Rowan's firmness and commitment to the task enabled the Mission parameters to be established in a basic fashion, although self-sufficiency proved to be an unrealistic goal, due to both environmental conditions and the radical culture change required, as well as the lack of funding needed to overcome these difficulties. Rowan was fortunate to have the faithful assistance of Cook, who formed a closer and more personal relationship with the Aborigines. The Aborigines respected Rowan, but at a social distance, and became adapted to the poor living conditions and dependency on the Mission for basic sustenance and direction, while adopting passive and indirect forms of resistance and cultural maintenance in the face of Rowan's strong control. The parameters of underdevelopment were set in this period also, due to the 'containment and maintenance of Aborigines at minimum cost' approach of the Queensland Government at this time, and hence lack of adequate funds and personnel to achieve resocialisation and self-support more successfully.

The following period, before, during and after World War II, was regressive in terms of Mission aims, due to the necessity to disperse the Aborigines for some months, the social disruptions relating to wider contact with army personnel and settlers, and the difficulty of re-establishing a focus for the Mission when funding and staff supply were at the absolute minimum. Nicholls was inadequate for the role of superintendent, but the Bishop had no other choice but to appoint him at the time. Johnson was a more practical person for the task and began well, but was overburdened in working with only his wife's voluntary assistance, and finally burnt out by the pressures of social unrest and victimisation by outsiders. Briggs also began the task well, but his term was short-lived due to his contracting tuberculosis.

The time of Warby's 10-year superintendency, however, was the highlight of Mission history, for the three factors coalesced successfully. Warby's enthusiasm and vision for a new approach to self-sufficiency and dignity through co-operative brotherhood sparked new hope and an enthusiastic response from the Aborigines. This foundation of a new kind of relationship was then enhanced by a new attitude to funding by the Queensland Government as it shifted to the assimilation policy. Considerable increases in funding for support staff, combined with Warby's charismatic leadership and the initial success of the trochus shell industry for the Co-operative, were the foundations of a revitalisation of the Mission. Resocialising was still a goal, but without the colonial mentality, while this climate fostered an active period in the Church life with close liaison between social and sacred aspects of life. The new developments in the Mission suffered, however, from the total pattern of change depending on outside support, the continuing dependency of Aborigines on the Mission system, and the underlying disparities of the Co-operative method with Aboriginal patterns of co-operation, and finally collapsed when economic conditions could not sustain the Co-operative.

9. Conclusion

Three theoretical perspectives were adopted in this study of the interaction of missionaries and Aborigines at the Lockhart River Mission from 1924 to 1967, and the study will be reviewed in the light of these three perspectives.

9.1. Internal Colonialism and Underdevelopment

The theory of internal colonialism gave important insight into the formation of 'colonial social relations' between Europeans and Aborigines. The capitalist mode of production of the colonists came into direct conflict with the Aboriginal mode of production. Whereas Aborigines found identity in the land and utilised its natural resources through hunting and gathering, the colonists sought to exploit the land for profitable production in the pastoral and agricultural industries. This exploitation of land could not be achieved without the dissolution of the Aboriginal mode of production, either through destruction of Aborigines or through their removal and resocialisation to the capitalist mode. As Morris states, the primary basis of the colonial relationship was the "expropriation of indigenous land" (Morris 1989:7). The 'colonial social relations' that were established by this expropriation, continued in the processes of cultural, political and economic dominance by Europeans, and resulted in Aboriginal cultural loss, exploitation of Aboriginal labour, and the social, economic and political marginalisation of Aborigines. This basic conflict was masked by the notions of social evolution which put the focus on racial and cultural characteristics that were considered to be inferior and had to be supplanted by the 'superior' forms of life brought by the British. It was assumed then, that for Aborigines to survive, they had to be protected and resocialised to adopt 'higher' stages of life.

Early missionaries shared these evolutionary notions and became caught up in this process, firstly through efforts to protect Aborigines from the destructive effects of contact and dispossession, which they found to be more effective in isolation from the corrupting and destructive elements of colonists and their expansion. Then in protected situations, they took up the dual aims of 'civilising', which endorsed the colonial

relations, and evangelising, which added their ultimate goal to impart religious transformation through the Christian Faith. The latter was seen to require a process of replacement of traditional Aboriginal religious belief and practice. The Mission station approach soon became established as the favoured method to carry out the holistic aim to 'civilise and evangelise'. This approach endorsed the European capitalist mode of production and promoted the dissolution of the Aboriginal hunting and gathering mode, through the method of establishing a settled village based on capitalist industry for self-support, and undergirded by Christian moral and spiritual values, i.e. settle, resocialise, evangelise.

In the case of the Lockhart River Mission, this process was undermined by the lack of commitment by Governments and Church members to the goal of resocialisation. The protective isolation of Missions had the effect of marginalising Aborigines away from the spheres of colonial expansion and exploitation of land. Thus marginalised, they were rendered irrelevant to the expanding capitalist mode except where their labour could be exploited cheaply. Governments gave them low priority financially, and were content to take a long term view of their resocialisation and to let the concerned Churches carry the burden of their general welfare. The result of the mission effort at Lockhart River Mission, then, was not a resocialisation which enabled Aborigines to *enter* the capitalist mode of production, but marginalisation which produced a situation of underdevelopment. The Aborigines' own mode was disrupted and limited (under-developed), while they were made dependent on welfare support, through the infrastructure and personnel of the Mission, for their daily existence (i.e. effective re-development did not occur).

The Mission began at least 50 years after extensive European contact in the region which had occurred mainly through marine industries, limited mining activity, some pastoral activity and sandalwood gathering. The Anglican Church had little will or means for mission among Aborigines in the north through the costly Mission station approach, as it struggled to establish its institutional base in the new settlements of Queensland. After

the Mission did commence in 1924 with limited funds, the recession that followed in the late 1920s restricted development through a tightening of both Government and Church funding. The dual aims of the Mission continued to be hindered by debt and by lack of funds to engage a priest for years at a time, with the result that lay staff carried the burden of both maintaining a minimum of welfare and administration, and supplementing this with spiritual activity as best they could. Outside employment on luggers was essential for survival in the capitalist mode, but this also fractured the development of the Mission community because men were away from it for long periods at a time.

While Aborigines accepted the general parameters of Mission life and accommodated to them, the Mission also brought fundamental conflicts to Aboriginal society and the tensions produced led to responses of resistance. The primary colonial conflict between the Aboriginal spiritual understanding of land as a source of identity through belonging to a specific location, and the European exploitative understanding in which land is a commodity and becomes attached to people (Swain 1993:78-9) occurred in the process of resocialisation. A related conflict was that between a kin-based subsistence economy and a resource-based economy which was accessed through acceptance of the socio-religious Mission structure. It can be argued that the latter conflict arose from cargo cult-type attitudes to involvement with Europeans. Accepting 'boss-ship' brought a promise of access to a consistent means of sustenance. The desire of some Aborigines for a Mission appears to relate to the desire for such a protective relationship in order to ensure stability of group life and access to subsistence goods, but Mission efforts to induce accumulation for profit, came into conflict with kinship obligations to share resources.

There was a convergence of interests, then, in the development of the Mission, but a divergence of aims, the Aborigines desiring dependable survival, and the missionaries desiring socio-religious transformation. This gave rise to both accommodation to, and resistance to, European aims. Appropriation by Aborigines of the European means of supply was inhibited by the inadequacies of European resources and differing cultural

expectations, and this led the Aborigines into economic underdevelopment and a dependency on the Europeans themselves, rather than simply their goods, for survival in the Mission environment. The change to village-based living, as well as dependence on outside employment, placed limits on the extent of continuing hunting and gathering, but the Aboriginal mode was resorted to in hard times. The most adverse outcome of the Mission was the creation of dependency on Europeans, their foodstuffs and economy.

> The real tragedy of 'underdevelopment' is that of the gradual destruction of consciousness, by forcing people into dependency. The resulting disintegration or destructuration of society may go so far as an internalised negation of one's self and thus of one's real vitality (Verhelst 1990:61).

The social distress and apathy that is evident at different times indicates the loss of independence and self-determination during the Mission process.

9.2. Weber's types of authority

Weber's approach to authority illuminates the relationships of power in the Lockhart River Mission, and highlights the fact that change was mainly sparked by the charismatic individuality of particular individuals, ranging from particular Aborigines who desired that the protective environment of a Mission be established, to missionaries such as Rowan whose leadership was legitimated by those who entered the Mission, but whose authority was also enforced by some coercive change in relation to spear fights and social unrest. Real effectiveness on the part of missionaries may be gauged by the degree to which they were able to bridge the cultural gap in mutual accommodation and personal relationships. This occurred particularly with Cook and Warby, and their authority was legitimated due to their positive charismatic individuality.

A general source of conflict and divergence between missionaries and Aborigines lay in their different cultural expectations. An ongoing tension occurred between the legal-rational authority structure established by missionaries, and the legacy of traditional kin-based authority. When relations with missionaries were good, legal-rational authority was enhanced. On the other hand, traditional authority and expectations were renewed in times of stress and conflict with missionaries. Examples can be seen in the times of Johnson and Currie. Outside influence through visits of sympathetic researchers

(Thomson, West and Laade) gave reassurance to traditional cultural values and encouraged some retention of ceremonial practice.

The discussion of Weber's types of legitimate authority noted the lack of clarity in his view of the boundary between legitimate authority and non-legitimate coercion. Coerciveness has been noted in Rowan and Currie. Rowan exercised firm action to limit the apparent violence of Aboriginal dispute resolution. Other aspects of Rowan's time, however, indicate both accommodating attitudes on his part and Aboriginal respect for his authority, and this suggests that his firmness is an example of Weber's "rational discipline" (in Gerth & Mills 1946:253-4), i.e. he took firm steps necessary to establish the boundaries of the new order, while in other areas, such as adopting religious belief, he was persuasive rather than coercive. In the case of Currie, however, the frequency of protests against his authoritarian controls indicates that he exercised a non-legitimate coercion to establish his authority, and he gained reluctant compliance rather than legitimation of his authority.

The high point in relationships between Aborigines and missionaries clearly occurred with John Warby. His unpretentiousness, compassion, practicality and ability to work alongside and enthuse people, all contributed to a warm relationship and a charismatic leadership, at least with a core of local leaders, which produced a significant response of support for the religious foundations of the Missions and for the economic vision of plenty through the Co-operative. It was as if the divergent aims of Aborigines and missionaries had finally come together, and again, not without some cargo cult-like elements in the combination of religious and economic activity, co-operation, and expected bounty. Warby-time, however, also illustrates clearly the two key factors in the overall failure of the Mission enterprise to transform Aborigines socially and economically for participation in the Australian capitalist economy as a self-supporting community. The first factor was that the Mission project as a whole was based upon European cultural values and was not grounded in Aboriginal culture. Even the

assumption that the Co-operative matched Aboriginal patterns of sharing was superficial. Writing of other Third-World contexts, Verhelst notes,

> To the often fragmentary nature of the initiatives undertaken or supported by NGOs and popular liberation movements must be added another drawback. ... It concerns the fact that these projects are insufficiently rooted in the local culture or cultures. There appears to be, in the minds of many Third World communities, a kind of resistance to the process of development which is being imposed on them and even to that which, in all good faith, is proposed to them (Verhelst 1990:16).

The second factor in the failure of the Mission enterprise was the inability of Church and Government to establish the material foundations necessary for successful entry to the world of capitalism, resulting in underdevelopment and its dependencies. The Church had a grander vision of transformation, but could never raise adequate support in funds, or enough suitable missionaries to achieve this end, even if the cultural barriers could have been overcome. Warby attempted to break through the underdevelopment in developing the localised capitalist enterprise of the Co-operative. When it failed economically, however, all the factors causing underdevelopment resurfaced with fresh intensity.

9.3. Burridge's categories of 'Devotional' and 'Affirmative'

The religious side of Mission life was considered mainly in Burridge's categories of the 'Devotional' and 'Affirmative'. The influence of Torres Strait Islander approaches to Christianity was significant in the early years through Islander staff, but there was no real attempt to theologise about, or to come to terms with, Aboriginal religious practice in attempting to establish an indigenous church at Lockhart River. Aborigines came to draw parallels in viewing Christianity in terms of "Bora belonga White Man" and "Bora like Church" (Thompson 1985), but the religious understanding and acceptance, particularly in connection with life passages and festival times, remained associated with a mixture of English European ethos, through the Anglo-Catholic ritual practices and forms, and Torres Strait Islander styles of sacred song and secular dance. Although most Chaplains and Superintendents developed a balance of 'Devotional' and 'Affirmative', the 'Affirmative' side tended to dominate overall, due to the shortage of Chaplains and funds for them, and to the inevitable preoccupations in coping with inadequate resources

in the efforts to develop the Mission. This had the perverse effect of producing a degree of rationalisation or secularisation, as religion, both Christian and Aboriginal, became to some degree marginalised by the material preoccupations (c.f. Thompson 1988a).

The net result of 43 years of Anglican mission at Lockhart River was an underdeveloped people, dependent on European welfare economy and management, partly resocialised to village living and European technology, disconnected from the vitality of their cultural roots and identity, with an adopted Christian religion that was associated more with the institutional form of the Mission than their own cultural roots, and finally, in the handover to Government control, with a loss of confidence in the Church that had nurtured their new way of life. The positive side of this is that the Anglican Church was prepared to be involved with the Aboriginal people of the region in assisting them to respond to the social changes that had already affected their lives. While Mission aims were incomplete, the Mission enabled the Aborigines to adapt to community life on a broader scale and begin to relate to the wider Australian society, and a core group found meaning and purpose for their lives through the Christian Faith. Despite the problems of the Mission, Aborigines who grew up in that context looked back upon it in later years as almost a 'golden age' compared to complexities of their later experience, and held good-hearted missionaries like Warby in fond regard.

9.4. Alternatives to the past

It is difficult to project back to what might have happened to avoid the development of underdevelopment, given the attitudes and policies of the time. The major factor missing in the establishment of the Mission was respect for Aboriginal cultural integrity and decision-making. At the same time, Aboriginal life was already considerably disrupted in 1924, and cultural changes had taken place through new contact experiences and attraction to outside goods and employment. Significantly greater funding of the Mission for resocialisation would have overcome many difficulties in establishing staff, infrastructure and developing local industry, but would have been less successful in

overcoming cultural barriers and the environmental problems of the isolated location and the adverse economics of market access.

A more appropriate approach may have been to establish a central settlement as a meeting point between the two cultural worlds, providing both a protective sphere in relation to health services, to employment and the acquisition and understanding of new ways, and also tolerance and acceptance of a continuation of Aboriginal association with their lands, mode of production and ceremonial life. Together with a non-coercive dialogue in matters of religion, politics and economics, this would have provided a better basis for mutual understanding and the development of bi-cultural skills. Such an approach, however, was inconceivable in the context of 'colonial social relations'.

9.5. Towards the future

Consideration of the way forward is more important now, given that the history of the Mission and the underdevelopment and dependencies produced, are part of the history of the Lockhart River people. In the immediate future following the handover to Government control, the Government did provide considerable funds for the rebuilding of the community at the new site and appointed a staff of public servants with a view to accelerating resocialisation towards eventual assimiliation into the wider Australian community. However, nothing had been learned from the failure of the Mission to come to terms with Aboriginal aspirations, attitudes and identity. The accelerated pace of change simply produced further resistance to change, social conflict and confusion.

Church involvement was now reduced to a Chaplaincy (I was the first Chaplain appointed at the new site), and the Church faced a difficult task, having lost the confidence of the people in the handover, and having to come to terms with loss of power and authority in the community. The latter position was actually an advantage to the Church's mission, for it enabled a presentation of the Christian Faith in ways that showed its primary voluntarist and serving characteristics. At the same time, the Chaplain was able to be an independent buffer in the pressures of rapid social change, and be one who

encouraged a reaffirmation of Aboriginal identity and cultural practice, and able to be supportive against some of the pressures of Government officials and politicians. This was a novel approach in Anglican ministry with Aborigines, but cultural affirmation and accommodation were encouraged at the time in the anthropological content of preparation for mission at the ABM's Training College (House of the Epiphany) in Sydney and in its sponsorship of Chaplains to undertake linguistic study with the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

Now, some 28 years further on from the Mission time, little has changed in terms of the outcome of underdevelopment and dependency on outside welfare. Despite extensive funding, increased management, health and education services, employment programs, and the development of Aboriginal Councils, no substantial local industries have been established, and Aborigines are caught between staying in underdevelopment and social disintegration in their family contexts, alleviating this by developing decentralised homeland bases, migrating to fringe life in towns and cities, or an almost impossible anti-cultural breaking away to independent living through advancing in education and outside employment. More purposeful living in the Lockhart River community may be developed through greater encouragement of bi-cultural skills, greater effort to overcome substance abuse and domestic violence, and the ability to choose and move between small-scale living in more traditional family groups in homeland centres with access to adequate support services, and advancing educationally or socially in the wider multicultural society of Australia.

The ministry of the Church at Lockhart River also needs a fresh approach to break away from the remnants of the traditional pattern of pastoral ministry based around a centralised village church, to more creative ways to encourage and actively support the renewal of Aboriginal life in a combination of rediscovery of spiritual roots and a decentralised life style, and involvement in efforts to overcome the destructive elements in current social life.

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